THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

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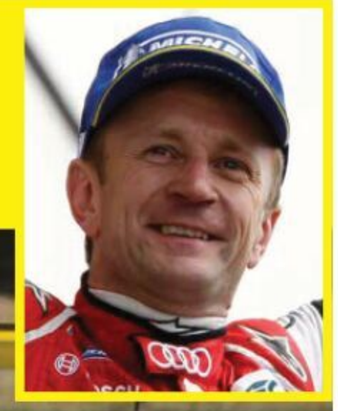
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

ALLAN McNISH



The sportscar maestro tackles the readers' questions P20

Rising British star hails effort of team after another grand prix podium finish

NORRIS: HOMEWORK HAS PAID OFF FOR McLAREN

Norris was right in the mix with Merc in Austria

Briton has high hopes for Silverstone

By Matt James

Lando Norris has credited the work done by his McLaren team as the young Briton stunned with his pace at the Red Bull Ring last weekend with another podium finish.

He started on the front row in Austria and battled on genuine pace with the Mercedes duo of Valtteri Bottas and Lewis Hamilton. He eventually finished third, and that was despite a five-second penalty for early-race contact with Red Bull's Sergio Perez. The race was won by Max Verstappen's Red Bull.

Norris said: "We did make a step forward and I think the car was definitely better and nicer to drive, both in qualifying and the longevity of a race. I think just the conditions also helped and our approach to the strategy was a little bit different this weekend compared to the last one after doing our homework and learning from a few things to try to improve on."

Norris's next race will be in front of a packed house at Silverstone on July 18.

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DOUBLE TOP DOES TRICK FOR KELLY

Fiesta man wraps up MN Circuit Rally title P28

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How the governing body is helping stars P18

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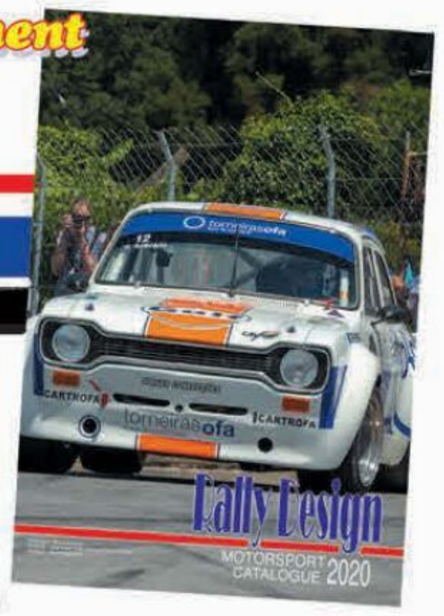

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COMMENT

Photo: Motorsport Images

Lando Norris went toe-to-toe with multiple world champion Lewis Hamilton

TIMING IS SPOT ON FOR LANDO

There was something special about Lando Norris's podium at the Austrian Grand Prix last weekend. Yes, it is not the first time that the engaging young British driver has finished on the rostrum – he has done it four times now – and it was the third time during this campaign the McLaren-Mercedes man has scaled the rostrum.

But it was the manner of his performance across the weekend that turned heads. From a front-row start, he was only looking forwards, rather than fighting a rear-guard action to fend off the perceived threat from Ferrari. Even his team was urging him to pace himself against the red cars, but Norris had none of it.

He raced competitively against both Lewis Hamilton (even though the World champ was crippled with a damaged Mercedes) and Valtteri Bottas. Norris didn't let an early set-back of a five-second penalty for contact with Sergio Perez's Red Bull knock him off his stride either.

It was a performance that not only set out his credentials to race at the very front of the pack, but one that will have t he crowds who are heading to Silverstone next weekend fizzing with excitement. The timing is right for his star to truly emerge.

Elsewhere in this issue, we speak to a man whose star truly emerged at Le Mans: Allan McNish. The likeable Scotman flirted briefly with Formula 1 with Toyota, but anyone who had seen his night-time stints at Le Mans in 1998 already knew that McNish was the match for anyone given the right equipment. Now content with life on the pitwall in Formula E, he tackles the MN readers' questions, as posed by Andy Hallbery.

Graham Keilloh finds out about how the governing body of this country, Motorsport UK, is offering a package of education and help to our rising stars from across the broad spectrum of motorsport – a system that has helped the likes of Norris reach the top.

Elsewhere, national rallying is back in full effect and we have reports from the concluding rounds of the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship – congratulations go to series stalwart Mark Kelly – and we also bring the action from the closed-to-spectators M-Sport Stages from the Greystoke Forest last weekend.

As rally fans begin to emerge from lockdown, MN brings you its traditional rally calendar. We hope it helps you plot your season and we will see you in the service parks very soon!

Matt James
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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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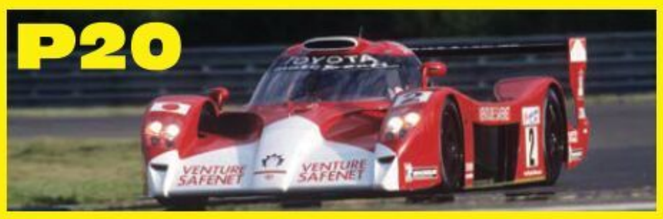
Flying Scotsman tackles the MN readers' posers



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Two wins seal perfect year for Mark Kelly

Fiesta man steps up to the plate for two wins and the MN Circuit title

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Moffett is the master of the Greystoke tests

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FORMULA 1 REPORT: AUSTRIA

Photos: Motorsport Images

Max and the adoring Dutch fans on Sunday

VERSTAPPEN BRINGS IT HOME FOR THE FANS IN AUSTRIA

A bumper crowd watch Red Bull dominate. By James Roberts

Floor damage slowed Lewis

McLaren's Lando Norris was a stand-out performer all weekend

One of the highlights of the Austrian Grand Prix, wasn't just the brilliant performance of Max Verstappen, but the fact he was able to share his win with a full complement of fans.

Across the weekend the Red Bull Ring welcomed a crowd of 132,000, many of whom were Dutch, dressed in their trademark orange.

They lit flares, waved flags and enjoyed a glass or two of Heineken (probably) as they witnessed their man take pole, lead every lap and secure the fastest lap of the race. With limited crowds and social distancing measures in place for so long, it was heartening to have so many fans back at a race track.

Verstappen's 15th grand prix win and 50th podium has given him a 32-point lead over Lewis Hamilton in the drivers' world championship. When the British driver picked up damage to the rear of his car (possibly caused by running wide over the kerbs at Turn 10), the partisan crowd roared their approval when he was passed by his team-mate Valtteri Bottas for second and compatriot Lando Norris for third. Norris's podium was greeted by such a loud cheer from the crowd that he joked they were wearing orange to support McLaren.

It had been another strong weekend for the 21-year-old who continues to receive plaudits for his speed. He took McLaren's first front row starting position for nine years when he qualified second on the grid, just 0.048s off Verstappen's pole time. Although the team underplayed expectations for the race, the ambient temperatures were lower than the previous weekend – and in addition to the step softer tyre compounds – the McLaren found its sweet spot. Not only did Norris race competitively with the Mercedes, he could have taken second place overall if it wasn't for a time penalty for a first-lap misdemeanour.

At the start, Verstappen led away from Norris in second, who was quick in a straight-line. As the field scrambled down to Turn 4, the Red Bull of Sergio Perez attempted to pass Norris around the outside for second place. Norris naturally drifted wide and Perez soon found himself driving through the gravel on the outside of the corner.

A safety car was deployed later on in the lap when Esteban Ocon's Alpine was parked at the side of the road with a broken front wheel, the consequence of a Turn 3 mid-pack squeeze.

Verstappen once again led at the restart, but Norris was able to hold off Hamilton for second place for longer than he'd managed the previous week. But on lap 20 came the news from race control that Norris would get a five-second penalty for not leaving a car's width to Perez. Hamilton then overtook the McLaren under-braking for Turn 4 on the same lap.

When it was time for Norris and Bottas to pit on lap 31, Bottas emerged ahead as Norris had to serve his five-second penalty.

In the first lap incident with Norris, Perez had fallen to 10th place. But ironically, Perez would also serve a five-second penalty for an almost identical incident at Turn 4 while racing with Charles Leclerc for eighth on lap 41. In fact, he was deemed to have forced the Ferrari off the track again at Turn 5 just six laps later…

It was a race full of penalties. Bizarrely, Japanese racer Yuki Tsunoda picked up two five-second penalties for *twice* crossing the white line at the pit entry for his two pitstops. Eight drivers were also summoned to see the stewards after the race for not slowing in the wake of a wheel-to-wheel last-lap crash between Sebastian Vettel's Aston Martin and the Alfa of Kimi Raikkonen.

Once again, there was no luck for George Russell. After making Q3 in a Williams for the first time (and starting eighth on the grid) he was so close to getting his first points for the team. Despite a resolute defence, he had no answer to Fernando Alonso, who snatched 10th place from the Williams driver in the closing laps.

Alonso gave the Brit a generous hug afterwards and said: "I felt for George when I saw he was P10. I was hoping it would be anyone else but him. He will have better opportunities for podiums and wins in the future."

Let's hope next week, the Silverstone crowd have as much to cheer about as those watching trackside in Austria.

F1 RESULTS

AUSTRIAN GRAND PRIX

Laps: 71 Track: Red Bull Ring

	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Max Verstappen	Red Bull-Honda	1h23m54.543s
2	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes	+17.973s
3	Lando Norris	McLaren-Mercedes	+20.019s
4	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	+46.452s
5	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	+57.144s
6	Sergio Perez	Red Bull-Honda	+57.915s
7	Daniel Ricciardo	McLaren-Mercedes	+1m00.395s
8	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	+1m01.195s
9	Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri-Honda	+1m01.844s
10	Fernando Alonso	Alpine-Renault	-1 lap

11 George Russell (Williams-Mercedes) -1 lap; 12 Yuki Tsunoda (AlphaTauri) -1 lap; 13 Lance Stroll (Aston Martin-Mercedes) -1 lap; 14 Antonio Giovinazzi (Alfa Romeo-Ferrari) -1 lap; 15 Kimi Raikkonen (Alfa Romeo-Ferrari) -1 lap; 16 Nicholas Latifi (Williams-Mercedes) -1 lap; 17 Sebastian Vettel (Aston Martin-Mercedes) 69 laps/accident; 18 Mick Schumacher (Haas-Ferrari) -2 laps; 19 Nikita Mazepin (Haas-Ferrari) -2laps; 20 Esteban Ocon (Alpine-Renault) 0 laps/accident. **Drivers' Championship:** 1 Verstappen 182 points; 2 Hamilton 150; 3 Perez 104; 4 Norris 101; 5 Bottas 92; 6 Leclerc 62. **Constructors' Championship:** 1 Red Bull 286 points; 2 Mercedes 242; 3 McLaren 141; 4 Ferrari 122; 5 AlphaTauri 48; 6 Aston Martin 44.

Russell put up a valiant display over the closing stages for 11th

Champ Hamilton ready to embrace Formula 1's new horizons

Lewis Hamilton has committed to racing with Mercedes for another two years saying he has a new found love for Formula 1.

In the closest fight between two teams in the turbo hybrid era, Hamilton says the title battle with Max Verstappen has made him "dig deeper." There was a suggestion the 36-year-old might retire rather than continue with a reset in the regulations next year, but instead he'll continue to the end of 2023.

"We've been challenged more than ever this year," said Hamilton. "I love racing. This is what I was born to do and I feel fit and as committed as ever, so I saw no reason to stop.

"At the start of the year, when the cars were equal, it was one of the most exciting times I've had for sometime. This battle has reinvigorated the love I have for this sport."

Lando feeling the heat as fresh licence penalty puts him in peril

Lando Norris has asked for "common sense" to be applied to stewards decisions, after the racer has reached 10 points on his licence. If a driver receives 12 points in a 12-month period they are handed a one-race ban.

Norris was given a five-second penalty and two licence points for a first lap incident in Austria, in which he was adjudged to have driven Sergio Perez off the track. He argued Perez – on his outside – understeered off the track.

"There should be decisions when someone's done something dangerous and put someone in harm's way and then you have racing where people have to use common sense. I did everything safely, why should I deserve penalty points? It's stupid in my opinion."

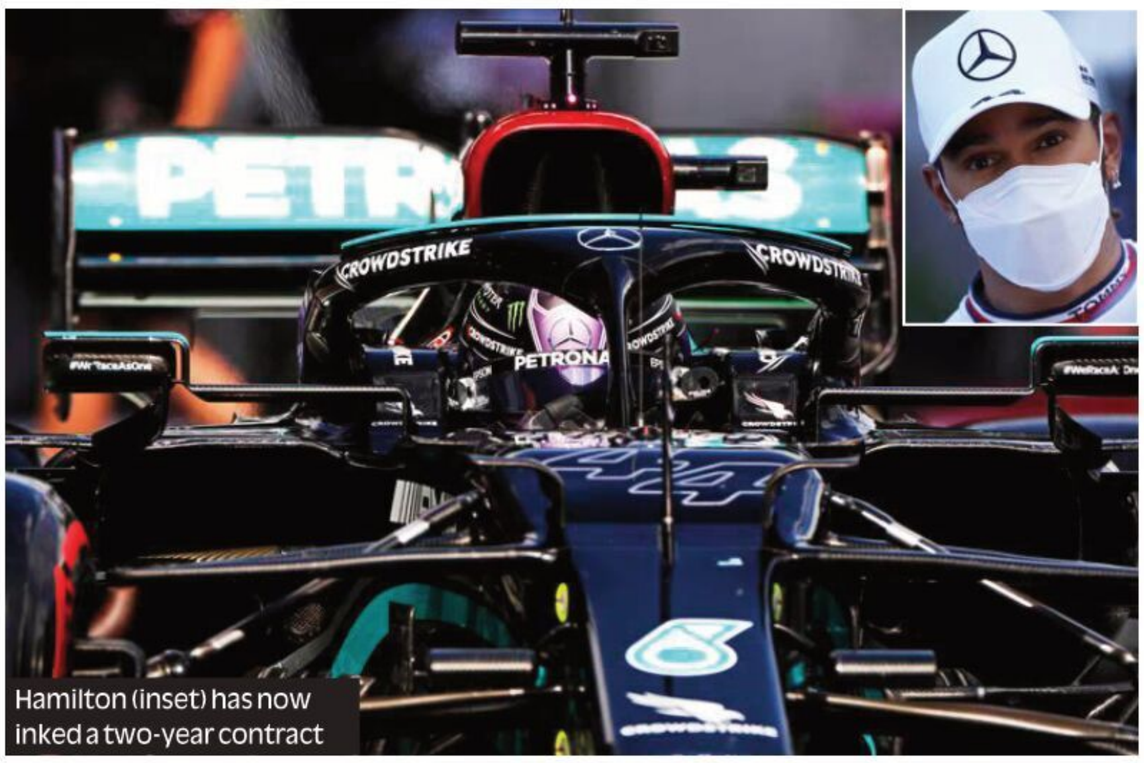
Two of Norris's points will expire before he races at the British GP, dropping him to eight overall for the 12-month period.

RACING NEWS

Photo: Motorsport Images

HAMILTON COMMITS TO MERCEDES UNTIL 2023 WITH NEW TWO-YEAR DEAL

Champion extends his stay at the championship-winning team and in Formula 1 with deal



Hamilton (inset) has now inked a two-year contract

By Graham Keilloh

Lewis Hamilton has signed a new two-year deal with Mercedes that will keep him at the team and in Formula 1 until the end of 2023.

The seven-time champion joined Mercedes from McLaren for 2013 and since has won six titles there as well as equalled Michael Schumacher's record for championships and topping his race-win mark. Hamilton's early confirmation of a two-year deal is in contrast to last season when Hamilton ended the year out of contract then signed for only one more season.

The deal means Hamilton will remain with Mercedes for next year's major rules change, as well as that his stint with the team will last at least 11 seasons. Hamilton will be approaching his 39th birthday when his contract expires.

Hamilton said: "We've accomplished so much together but we still have a lot to achieve, both on and off the track.

"I'm incredibly proud and grateful of how Mercedes has supported me in my drive to improve diversity and equality in our sport. They have held themselves accountable and made important strides in creating a more diverse team and inclusive environment."

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff added: "As we enter a new era of F1 from 2022 onwards, there can be no better driver to have in our team than Lewis. We are relishing the battle we have on our hands this year – and that's why we also wanted to agree this contract early, so we have no distractions from the competition on track."

Alex Zanardi is recovering

ALEX ZANARDI'S WIFE GIVES CONDITION UPDATE

Alex Zanardi's wife Daniela Zanardi has given on update on the CART champion's condition following his serious head and facial injuries sustained colliding with a truck last June.

"It has been a very complex process that has required more neurosurgery and been characterised by a number of setbacks," she said. "Alex is in a stable condition, which means he is able to undergo training programmes for both his brain and his body.

"He can communicate with us, but he is still unable to speak. After a long time in a coma, the vocal cords must regain their elasticity.

"He still has a lot of strength in his arms and hands, and is training intensively on the equipment."

Daniela added she could not be sure when her husband could return home.

HAUGER EXTENDS LEAD WITH FIA F3 PODIUM TREBLE

Dennis Hauger has vastly extended his lead at the top of the FIA Formula 3 standings with a treble podium weekend at the Red Bull Ring.

The Norwegian Red Bull junior won the reversed-grid opener from 12th on the grid, claiming the lead late on when Trident's Clement Novalak and HWA's Matteo Nannini collided when disputing the lead. Hauger led home a Prema 1-2 ahead of British team-mate Olli Caldwell who retained his second place despite picking up a five-second track limits penalty.

In race two Hauger again charged through from starting 12th and this time finished third, with Trident's David Schumacher, son of F1 star Ralf, taking a maiden win ahead of ART's Frederik Vesti.

Hauger started the third race on pole and led from the off though second-place starter Vesti passed on lap five and led Hauger home. Caldwell completed the podium.

Hauger, who entered the round leading the table by six points, now has a 41-point advantage over Vesti.

Hauger said: "For sure it has been a good [weekend], extending the championship lead. Race 1, coming from P12 to P1 was really good. From then on, I was just trying to keep the rhythm and keep the momentum."

Dennis Hauger: on a roll

Newgarden has got his show back on the road

NEWGARDEN ENDS BAD RUN WITH MID-OHIO WIN

Josef Newgarden took IndyCar victory at Mid-Ohio last weekend after holding off a late charge from Marcus Ericsson, the American with it ending his recent run of foul luck.

The Penske driver led much of the previous two IndyCar races, at Detroit and Road America, but tyre degradation and technical woe denied him. At Mid-Ohio the two-time champion again led and this time prevailed despite Ganassi driver Ericsson eating into his advantage late on. It is Newgarden's first victory of the year.

Ericsson's team-mate Alex Palou finished third, 22 seconds shy of the winner, and continues to lead the standings, 39 points clear of Arrow McLaren SP's Pato O'Ward who finished eighth at Mid-Ohio. Newgarden sits fourth in the table 69 points back from Palou.

Newgarden said: "I'd start each stint and feel like we had everything under control. You get to the back end of it, and I felt like I was starting to fall apart, so it was really hard to hang on.

"Everyone has been giving me a hard time, asking what's up with us not winning a race. But I don't think Team Penske could have done anything different. We've been in the game almost every race."

CHADWICK TAKES DOMINANT BOUNCE-BACK W SERIES WIN

Jamie Chadwick took a dominant W Series victory at Austria's Red Bull Ring last Saturday, bouncing back from a tricky season opener at the same venue the previous week.

Reigning champion Chadwick, driving for Veloce Racing, led every session last weekend then led every race lap from pole, building a five-second lead by half distance, helped by second-placed starter Beitske Visser having a slow getaway. Chadwick also got the fastest lap.

The previous week, by contrast, Chadwick had started eighth after a cracked pipe compromised qualifying, and then fought back from a second-lap collision to finish in sixth position.

Behind Chadwick, rookie Irina Sidorkova finished second, the 18-year-old W Series Academy pilot holding off Emma Kimilainen of Ecurie W.

Chadwick now leads the table by three points over fellow Briton Sarah Moore of Scuderia W.

Chadwick said: "I don't know what happened to [Beitske] at the start but that helped me and allowed me to build a gap, maintain it and just control the race.

"There was so much to work on after last week, but I took the positives and went into this week with more fire in my belly to turn it around and I did just that."

Chadwick will head for Silverstone on top of the points table

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, TF Sport, Praga

BTCC going back to normal

BTCC RETURNS TO TRADITIONAL CALENDAR FORMAT FOR 2022

Early release of line-up to help other major events avoid clashes

CALENDAR

BTCC 2022

DATE	VENUE	RNDS
April 23-24	Donington Park	1-3
May 14-15	Brands Hatch Indy	4-6
May 28-29	Thruxton	7-9
June 11-12	Oulton Park	10-12
June 25-26	Croft	13-15
July 30-31	Knockhill	16-18
August 13-14	Snetterton	19-21
August 27-28	Thruxton	22-24
September 24-25	Silverstone National	25-27
October 8-9	Brands Hatch GP	28-30

By Matt James

Next year's British Touring Car Championship will kick off at Donington Park on April 24 and conclude with its traditional meeting on the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit on October 9.

After two seasons where the line-up has been altered to cope with Covid restrictions and limits on crowd numbers, the 2022 event roster returns to a more familiar line-up.

Outlon Park in Cheshire, Croft in North Yorkshire and Knockhill in Fife revert to their usual order in the middle of the 10-meeting campaign. The second 'floating' meeting that was slotted in as a result of the closure of Rockingham is retained by Thruxton and will take place in late August.

Series chief executive Alan Gow said: "I'm pleased to confirm our calendar and, as the biggest series in the UK, it continues our commitment to taking the BTCC to as many different areas of the country as is feasibly possible.

"Finishing on the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit has become something of a tradition for the BTCC and it is a great place for the finale, as the drama of the previous showdowns has shown."

The category once again features a five-week gap in the middle of the schedule. Croft, the fifth meeting of the season, is due to take place on June 26, while the second five races kick off with Knockhill on July 31.

Gow added: "It is vital that our schedule is issued so early, to allow the rest of British motorsport to plan their respective calendars."

TF'S KEATING GETS ADDITIONAL MONZA RUNNING

TF Sport regulars Ben Keating and Ross Gunn will make a guest appearance in the Le Mans Cup this weekend at Monza to give Keating World Endurance Championship round preparations.

The pair will race a Aston Martin Vantage GT3 this Saturday in Italy, as TF Sport's Am driver Keating is seeking extra track time at the venue ahead of WEC's round there the following weekend that he'll also race in with TF.

This follows the 49-year-old American Keating having a trying previous WEC round at Portimao in mid June wherein the TF Vantage finished eighth in the GTE-Am battle two laps down, after penalties for a blue-flag infringement and for contact.

Keating's opportunity to get additional preparation at the Italian track is helped by the Le Mans Cup's regulations that give the Bronze-graded driver more track time.

TF owner Tom Ferrier said: "Ben got to grips with the Vantage GT3 quickly at Daytona in January and ran with impressive pace, so he knows the car. This is a great opportunity for Ben to become comfortable with Monza before the next WEC round. It's a very fast circuit and we know he'll be more than capable of getting a great result, come the WEC weekend."

Keating gets more Monza time

GINETTA ROOKIE VOISIN HAT-TRICK "BEST BOUNCE BACK"

Ginetta Junior rookie Callum Voisin has called his Brands Hatch hat-trick of wins the "best bounce back possible" after a 70-point deduction in the preceding Snetterton round.

Voisin got the deduction for a technical infringement on his R Racing car.

Voisin told Motorsport News: "It was a weird weekend at Snetterton, quite a harsh penalty but rules are rules, and then after that it was just making sure I could get the best bounce back possible which we did quite well!

"After [the penalty] it was, it doesn't really matter anymore, just go out there and do your best, I wanted to prove all of them wrong. It's [the hat-trick] still quite a surprise."

Voisin has now won five of this season's eight races, though sits seventh in the standings 42 points off the top.

"We came into the [Brands Hatch] round 100 points behind in the standings but we got back about 60 of them in one race meeting," Voisin added. "It's still a tall order but I feel more confident about it than I was.

"Most rookies struggle in their first year just to understand the car, I've gelled with it quite well and that's given me the edge over most other rookies and some second-year [drivers]."

Voisin: rookie on a roll

Glynn Geddie will now step aside

TEAM HARD ON THE HUNT FOR NEW BTCC DRIVER

Team Hard boss Tony Gilham is considering making a shock comeback to the race-driving seat in the British Touring Car Championship.

Gilham runs four Cupra Rs in the category and Jack Goff's version finished on the podium at the last meeting at Brands Hatch in the hands of Jack Goff.

But one of the drivers, Glynn Geddie – who is team-mate to Goff, Nic Hamilton and Aron Taylor-Smith – has had to step aside.

Geddie said: "My priorities, at least temporarily, have changed and my new commitments away from racing have meant that I can no longer fully focus on my racing which is affecting my ability to meet the targets that I set myself for this year."

Gilham said he is in talks with a number of drivers about taking over the seat, and if he is unable to find a suitable replacement then he would take the controls himself.

"There are a lot of people interest but hey, I have some unfinished business," said the 66-time BTCC race starter. "There is plenty of time to sort it out before the next rounds, so let's see."

DIBDEN REPLACES W SERIES-BOUND EATON IN PRAGA

Dibden: stepping in for Eaton

Ashley Dibden will replace W Series departee Abbie Eaton in the high-performance Praga R1T for the remainder of the Britcar Endurance championship season partnering Gordie Mutch.

Monoposto Formula 3 champion Dibden made his Praga race debut last Saturday, finishing 11th in Silverstone's two-hour race, and will also race at Brands Hatch later this month and at Donington Park in October. All three rounds clash with W Series meetings.

Dibden said: "Abbie and Gordie have already shown the car has race-winning pace which puts me in a fantastic position partnering with Gordie to try and deliver some great results for the rest of the year."

Eaton and Mutch's #333 Three Lions Praga has been hit by reliability troubles this year. Eaton told Motorsport News recently: "If it wasn't for Gordie and I's issues we'd be leading the championship, whenever we've actually finished a race we've been first or second."

FATAL C1 ACCIDENT AT SNETTERTON

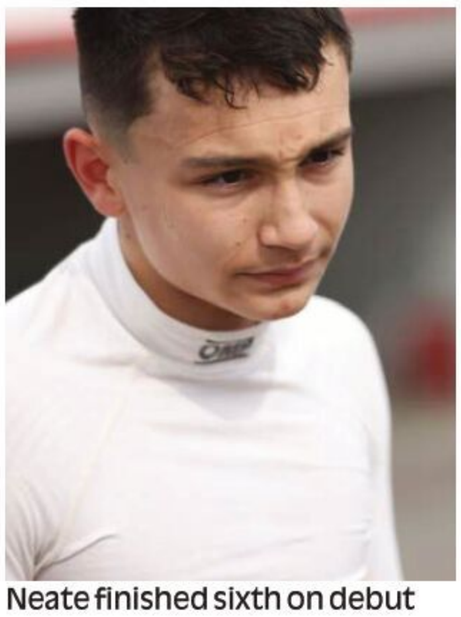
Motorsport News was sad to learn that racer Angela Lucas died in an accident during Snetterton's second C1 Challenge race last Sunday.

Lucas was racing in the British Automobile Racing Club meeting for the Racedriver.me team and her husband is the team manager.

BARC group CEO Ben Taylor told MN: "All of our thoughts are with the family and friends of those affected and the community of the C1 racing club which has grown over recent years to be such a close-knit family.

"We all feel the loss keenly and our concerns are for everyone affected including the amazing marshals and rescue teams."

RACING NEWS



Neate finished sixth on debut

Photo: Jakob Ebrey, James Roberts, Richard Styles

Neate only got his licence the day before race one

NEATE LOOKS TO FRONT BATTLE AFTER STRONG BRITISH F4 BOW

The BTCC driver's son finished sixth on his category debut after celebrating his 15th birthday – the championship's minimum age – the day before the race

By Graham Keilloh

Aiden Neate is expecting to fight at the front from the next British Formula 4 round following an impressive Brands Hatch debut right after reaching the category's minimum participation age.

Argenti driver Neate, who has competed in two French F4 rounds this year, claimed sixth place in his first British F4 race a day after celebrating his 15th birthday. In the remaining races he took 16th after a lap-one mistake, then ninth.

"There's a lot of positives to take," Neate told Motorsport News about his debut, "so going into Oulton Park for the next round there's no reason why we can't turn up and be fighting at the front. I didn't honestly know what to expect going into the weekend, so I went in with full confidence, I'd definitely done enough days in the car. From my first practice I realised that we had good speed.

"I didn't actually own a race licence until the Friday morning of the race weekend! It was nice to sit there knowing I was probably one of the youngest ever!"

Neate's father Andy raced at the same meeting in the British Touring Car Championship. "It was really nice to race on the same weekend as my father," Aiden added. "It's something I've never done before. We were always speaking to each other whenever we could, he always has good advice!"

ZEO PROTOTYPE SERIES DEBUT A "HUGE SUCCESS"

Organisers have called the Zeo Prototype race series' recent debut a "huge success" with an eclectic 15-car grid gathered at a wet Silverstone.

It was the first time in two years that the British Racing and Sports Car Club featured sports prototype racing.

Matt Manderson in his Radical SR8 just held off series creator Duncan Williams' Norma LMP3 throughout the opening race, winning by 0.2 seconds.

Manderson's race-two gamble of starting on slicks on a drying track did not pay off while Williams spun and damaged his Norma's right rear at Brooklands on lap one. This left Mike Jenvey to dominate in his Jenvey-Gunn TS6.

The unlimited prototype series' next round is at Brands Hatch on August 8, where more cars are expected.

Many machines for Zeo

SNETTERTON: BARC BY PETER SCHERER — JULY 3-4

HAND TAKES JSCC DOUBLE WIN

Charlie Hand gave his Junior Saloon title chase a boost with another double victory.

Aaron Walker chased him hard in race one, but a blown engine robbed him of second place. Ruben Hage and James Wallis joined Hand on the podium.

Hand briefly lost the lead to Walker in the second race as they rounded Oggies on the second lap. But both he and Harvey Caton shot past Walker into Wilson a lap later. Walker reclaimed second on the exit, but Caton lost third to Oliver Cottam.

Three wins helped Matt Bell consolidate his lead in the Radical Challenge. Jerome de Sadeleer was set for a strong second in the opening race until a crank sensor let him down, promoting Jason Rishover, with Mark Richards third.

With barely a handful of racing laps in the second race it was a lights-to-flag win for Bell from De Sadeleer and Rishover, with a red flag ending the proceedings.

De Sadeleer was out of luck again in the final race. He was second after the pitstops, but brake problems meant he dropped him to fifth, leaving Bell well clear of Chris Preen and John MacLeod.

Will Hunt lost his unbeaten Radical SR1 Cup record, as James Lay secured a winning double. Lay was a comfortable race one winner, with Hunt reclaiming second from Frazer McFadden a lap from home, after Dean Warriner and Mackenzie Walker had gone ploughing on the outside of Riches.

Hunt had the better start in race two, but after he went in too deep at the Wilson Hairpin Lay got by with four laps remaining.

Hand took his latest double triumph in the Junior Saloon contest

Fresh from their win at the Silverstone C1 24hrs, Hybrid Tune Full Circle Racing's Stephen James/David Meenan were on top form again. After dominating the final hour, they had just over 30 seconds in hand over CSC Motorsport's Patrick Scharfegger/Steve Beswick at the flag, with Quattro Formaggio's Alistair May/Chris Parkes in third position.

Quattro Formaggio had just pitted from the lead of the second race, with 40 minutes on the clock, when it was red flagged due to a serious accident at Riches.

RACE WINNERS

Junior Saloons
Races 1 & 2: Charlie Hand

Radical Challenge
Races 1, 2 & 3: Matt Bell

Radical SR1 Cup
Races 1 & 2: James Lay

C1 Challenge
Race 1: Hybrid Tune – Full Circle Racing (Stephen James/David Meenan);
Race 2: not declared

Kumho BMW Challenge
Race 1: James Card (E46 M3);
Race 2: Brad Sheehan (E46 M3)

Max5 Racing
Race 1: Jonathan Halliwell (MX5 Mk4);
Race 2: Paul Roddison (MX5 Mk4)

LYDDEN HILL: LHRC BY MARK LIBBETER — JULY 4

VICTORY BRACES FOR BOTH COLBURN BROTHERS AT LYDDEN HILL

There was joy aplenty for the Colburn family at Lydden Hill's annual Historics On The Hill meeting last Sunday as brothers James and Ben both recorded double victories in their respective categories.

A rapid start had initially propelled the Alfetta GTV of Chris Snowdon into the lead of the first Classic Alfa Challenge race before poleman James Colburn passed him at Devil's Elbow half way around the first lap. Moments later, an incident at Chesson's Drift for Frank Horsfield led to a brief race stoppage.

Snowdon repeated his fast getaway at the restart, but an unscheduled stop to secure a loose door helped Colburn claim a lead he would never lose.

Alex Jupe entertained the crowd as he threw his Alfetta GTV sideways en route to second ahead of Paul Auston's Lotus Elan SIII.

Colburn doubled up in race two, while younger brother Ben, in a 1750 Berlina, recovered from a first-race retirement to snatch second from Jupe, making his move at Paddock on lap 13 of 17.

Colburn Jr dominated both Allstars races in his Lenham Sprite GT, repeating the feat he achieved at the same event last September. Mike Jordan claimed a pair of seconds in his Austin Mini Cooper S, while Andrew Prill in a Pandora SP and former Porsche Supercup ace Tom Sharp in a BMW 1800TiSi took a third apiece.

British Rallycross champion Nathan Heathcote withstood pressure from 2013 BTCC champion and current Mini Miglia series leader Andrew Jordan to win both Jack Sears Trophy contests in his Mini Cooper S.

Jordan, using the same car father Mike had driven in the Allstars encounters, was spectacular as ever in his attempts to relieve Heathcote of the lead, but he was forced to settle for second either time.

Third place in both races was taken by Dan Lewis in another Austin Mini Cooper

RACE WINNERS

HRDC Jack Sears Trophy
Races 1 & 2: Nathan Heathcote (Mini Cooper S)

HRDC Allstars
Races 1 & 2: Ben Colburn (Lenham Sprite GT)

HRDC Classic Alfa Challenge
Races 1 & 2: James Colburn (Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GT)

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FAST car entertainment

RALLY NEWS

Photo: FIA ERC

Breen took advantage of qualifying rules

Breen was labelled a "cheat" by champion Alexey Lukyanuk

BREEN ON THE DEFENSIVE AFTER EUROPEAN RALLY ROAD POSITION ROW

Irishman says he didn't break the rules in qualifying bust-up

By Graham Lister

Craig Breen insists he wasn't breaking the rules on Rally Liepaja after European champion Alexey Lukyanuk labelled him a "cheat".

Russian Lukyanuk was angry after Breen's slow time through the qualifying stage for last weekend's second round of the ERC ensured he would start 21st on the road on the Latvian gravel event, 11 places behind Lukyanuk.

Breen clocked three top-two stage times in the Hyundai i20 R5 he shares with co-driver Paul Nagle on leg one and completed Friday's route 15.4 seconds ahead of Lukyanuk. This angered the Citroen man who suggested Breen had gained an unfair advantage.

"I'm not satisfied with the conditions we have for competition because guys starting behind with a cheat in qualifying steal our points and they spoil our rally," Lukyanuk said after leg one. "It's not great and I don't feel much respect for them to be honest."

Irishman Breen claimed the first ERC podium for Indian tyre firm MRF in second overall behind winner Nikolay Gryazin. He sympathised with Lukyanuk, who had to make do with third after a trip into a ditch on Saturday morning damaged his car's radiator, but insisted he did nothing wrong.

"He's completely correct, I'd be angry as well," Breen said. "Unfortunately, the rules are [written in a] way that you can do what I did. Where we are in the development [of the tyres], it's important to get every advantage we can. I absolutely understand what he's saying but the rule is a little too open. I don't want to start pointing this finger and that finger but he did the very same thing in Canaries [last November] to try to get a different [start] time to establish the weather. OK, it was a little more rude here but I understand where he's coming from."

STANDINGS

After round 2/8

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Alexey Lukyanuk (RUS)	64
2	Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR)	55
3	Miko Marczyk (POL)	51
4	Nikolay Gryazin (RUS)	39
5	Efren Llarena (ESP)	37
6	Craig Breen (IRL)	34

HOW DID THE ERC ARGUMENT ERUPT?

European Rally Championship events use a qualifying stage format to determine the top 15 starting positions for the opening leg.

Following two practice runs, drivers get one shot at the qualifying stage with the fastest 15 earning the right to select their starting positions. The fastest driver in qualifying selects first followed by the second fastest driver and so on until all 15 spots are chosen.

Typically, the quickest drivers will opt for the lowest road position possible on gravel events to benefit from a cleaner road surface, leaving the slower runners to pick the higher starting places.

The starting order for leg two uses a reverse-seeding rule with the top 10 after leg one essentially swapping positions to leave the rally leader 10th on the road for leg two.

Alexey Lukyanuk, who wants the ERC's rulemaker, the FIA, to consider changing the format to make it for Rally2 cars only and opening the start selection to all qualifying stage participants, also made reference to former ERC3 Junior champion Efren Llarena. He started 25th and beat Lukyanuk to the overnight podium, although the Spaniard was adamant his time loss in qualifying was down to an overshoot rather than a tactical move.

Furniss joined the lucky Oscar Solberg on Liepaja Rally last weekend

FURNISS BENEFITS FROM OLIVER SOLBERG'S GIFT

Welsh co-driver Dale Furniss was a late addition to the Rally Liepaja entry – thanks to Oliver Solberg's generosity.

Solberg earned 100,000 euros (£85,000) for winning the ERC1 Junior title in 2020. But with the prize non-transferrable for use in another championship and due to Solberg's World Rally Car programme with Hyundai gathering strength, the teenager came up with a plan to gift the money to his cousin, Oscar Solberg, a former British Junior championship frontrunner.

Following a request by Oliver's father Petter, ERC promoter Eurosport Events and the FIA agreed to the move with the funds provided sufficient to cover Oscar's programme on the remaining five ERC Junior rounds in an M-Sport Poland-built and maintained Ford Fiesta Rally3, starting on Rally Liepaja, where Solberg finished second in class to Ken Torn.

"I was just focusing on the Norwegian championship in an old Volvo and was at work when Oliver called me and said, 'you better sit down'," explained the cash-strapped Oscar Solberg, whose last international appearance came in the Junior WRC on Rally Sweden in February 2020. "I have no words because I can't believe I am here, but it was really good to be back and the result here [in Latvia] gives me something to build on. But I have to say without this from Oliver I would not be here so I'm very grateful to him."

Furniss first co-drove Solberg on the Isle of Man Rally in 2017 with Rally Liepaja marking Solberg's second event using English pacenotes.

DEVINE CAUGHT OUT AGAIN ON BOGEY STAGE ON LIEPAJA EVENT

Rally Liepaja's Mazilmaja stage got the beating of Callum Devine for the second season running.

After he suffered "the biggest accident of my life" on the stage in 2020, the Irishman dropped out of the top-10 battle on his return last weekend when he broke his Ford Fiesta Rally2's suspension striking a rock when he ran wide.

"Funnily enough it was the same stage where I had my bad accident last year," said the Motorsport Ireland Rally Academy driver. "We were in a tight section, we ran wide onto the grass and probably nine out 10 times you'd have got away with it. But there must have been a big boulder hidden in the grass. The car went backwards in and clipped the sill and broke the back arm and broke the wheel all in one motion. We had to get it to the next junction before we could get it fixed."

Devine and co-driver James Foulton were able to carry out running repairs, which included disconnecting the rear brakes due to the damage.

However, they dropped more than 33 minutes in the process and languished in 44th at the finish having been 0.8 seconds off 10th place starting the stage.

"We had to get the rear brakes capped off and that meant we had no brakes for the next [stage]," Devine explained.

Having scored on Rally Poland last month, Devine left Latvia pointless.

He added: "It's a shame because we were having a good run and our times were improving. But at least we got to the end and got all the stages in."

Devine was caught out again but managed to make finish this time

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

RALLY NEWS

Cave will tackle the BRC

CAVE ENTERS NICKY GRIST WITH A FIESTA AS A ONE-OFF

Tom Cave is looking forward to trying a Ford Fiesta Rally2 on this weekend's Nicky Grist Stages as he wasn't able to source his usual Hyundai i20 R5 for the British Rally Championship round.

The last time Cave contested a rally not in a Hyundai was the same event three years ago when he drove a Mitsubishi Mirage R5.

"It's just a one-off at the moment, it's just purely the Nicky Grist," Cave told MN of his car switch and BRC presence. "We couldn't get a Hyundai over to the UK because of Brexit and it isn't financially logical for a team to come over from Europe to do it. Plan B was underway then and luckily Dommie [Buckley] offered us a car. Originally it was meant to be a Skoda but he said he's got a Rally2 Fiesta available which is good, looking forward to that. It'll be interesting to drive the latest-spec Rally2 car.

"We've got to be realistic, it's a new car," Cave added. "If I'm not fastest out the blocks I'm not going to be kicking myself but don't get me wrong I am going there to go and win. It's in my DNA to go there and be the quickest driver so let's go and focus on that and try and achieve that."

Cave gets his first taste of the car today (Thursday) at Sweet Lamb but won't be scoring BRC points in it on Saturday. He explained: "I don't really want to piss off anyone else by signing up, doing one rally and taking points off other drivers. I think I have to consider that as well. It's purely just to get out there and try to bag a win, that's the plan."

CRONIN AND WILSON JOIN BRC PACK AS IT RETURNS TO GRAVEL

Stars ready to tackle this weekend's second BRC encounter, the Nicky Grist Stages

Photos: Chicane Media, Jakob Ebrey

Matt Edwards is number one seed

Matthew Wilson has entered and could do more events

By Luke Barry

Four-time British Rally champion Keith Cronin and former WRC driver Matthew Wilson will join the already bustling 2021 pack for round two of the British Rally Championship in south Wales this weekend.

The Nicky Grist Stages has returned to the calendar for the first time since 2017. Eight stages, totalling 44 miles, lie in wait with two passes of Llyn Login, Monument, Halfway and Crychan split by service.

Cronin returns to the BRC after a three-year layoff but got his eye in behind the wheel on last weekend's M-Sport Stages. His Ford Fiesta Rally2 will be on Hankook tyres this year. Wilson was also competing last weekend in a Fiesta Rally3 but will step up to a Rally2 for the Grist on what will be his first BRC rally since the Pirelli in 2016.

However M-Sport managing director, and Matthew's father, Malcolm told MN he could appear on more rounds this season. He said: "We'll just see how it goes, obviously he missed the first one. Basically a lot of it will depend on car availability and things like that. We just need to keep winning like we did on the first round that's our priority."

BRC championship manager Iain Campbell has hailed the "phenomenal" entry list for round two which also includes double and reigning champion Matt Edwards, Osian Pryce, Rhys Yates, round one winner Sam Moffett, his brother Josh, Frank Bird, Seb Perez, Garry Jennings and Ollie Mellors among others.

"The entry list is phenomenal," Campbell told MN. "It's a proper short, sharp, shock of a day and it's going to be flat out from the get-go. And it's going to be interesting to see who's on the pace, who's going to tune themselves right into their notes and make that commitment because I think it's going to be very much down to tenths of seconds."

The Nicky Grist Stages is a strictly non-spectator event and organisers have urged fans to watch the Special Stage livestream from home instead. Nicky Grist said: "The message is very clear – no spectators. I know it's disappointing, but it's only for one year. If fans ignore this plea and are seen on the stages, the rally will be stopped and it could affect the future of motorsport on the Epynt ranges."

SEEDED ENTRY LIST

Nicky Grist Stages

SEEDED	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Matt Edwards/Darren Garrod	Volkswagen Polo GTI R5
2	Rhys Yates/James Morgan	Ford Fiesta Rally2
3	Osian Pryce/Noel O'Sullivan	Volkswagen Polo GTI R5
4	Tom Cave/Dale Furniss	Ford Fiesta Rally2
5	Ollie Mellors/Max Freeman	Proton Iriz R5
6	Matthew Wilson/Stuart Loudon	Ford Fiesta Rally2
7	Sam Moffett/Keith Moriarty	Ford Fiesta Rally2
8	Keith Cronin/Mikie Galvin	Ford Fiesta Rally2
9	Josh Moffett/Andy Hayes	Hyundai i20 R5
10	Seb Perez/Gary McElhinney	Ford Fiesta Rally2

Lepley has the BTRDA Gold Star in his sights this year

LEPLEY AIMING TO BE A FACTOR IN "INTERESTING" BTRDA TITLE FIGHT

George Lepley is expecting an even and exciting title fight in the BTRDA Rally Series this year which gets underway on this Saturday's Nicky Grist Stages.

Lepley, who will again pilot a Mitsubishi Lancer E10, told MN he's "just super excited to get back going" but ideally he will be able to claim BTRDA Gold Star honours in 2021 after two Silver Star triumphs in 2018 and '19.

"But at the end of the day we're in a Group N+ car, it's a quite a big old bus so it's a big ask to compete against the R5 cars which aren't even R5s they're beyond that," Lepley cautioned. "It's a big ask to compete against that, the stopping and turning, even the acceleration out the corners but we'll do our best. We'll enjoy every second, every mile, and see what happens at the end of the year. Of course I'll give it my best shot."

There's a new look to the expected front of the pack this season with younger drivers like Tom Llewellin, Callum Black, Ian Bainbridge, Dylan Davies and Garry Pearson all in contention as well as Lepley.

"I think that will be nice," said Lepley. "The more experienced guys like [Stephen] Petch, Charlie Payne have done the same rallies year in, year out so they knew where they were going on the stages whereas we're all fairly fresh to the stages so it'll hopefully be a nice, close battle on an even playing field. It'll be interesting to see who comes out on top."

MULL RALLY ROUTE WILL BE UNCHANGED FOR 2021

The route for this year's Mull Rally (October 8-10) will be identical to the most recent iteration in 2019 with a few timing tweaks standing as the only alterations.

That means 16 stages, totalling 148 competitive miles, will be on offer across the two days with plenty of mileage in the night. Mull Car Club had looked at modernising the rally route through a consultation period late last year, but the overwhelming feedback was to keep things as they were.

Clerk of the course Andy Jardine has however stressed that the route may need to modified depending on the Covid-19 situation in October.

"It is impossible to be able to predict what the conditions will be like by the time we reach October and we can only hope that things continue to improve and we can run a near normal event," he said. "So far we are planning for that but as time goes on we will make the necessary alterations to ensure we run as safe as possible and fully compliant event."

Mull Rally will welcome the British Rally Championship for the first time this year.

Competitors on this season's Mull Rally will tackle 16 tests

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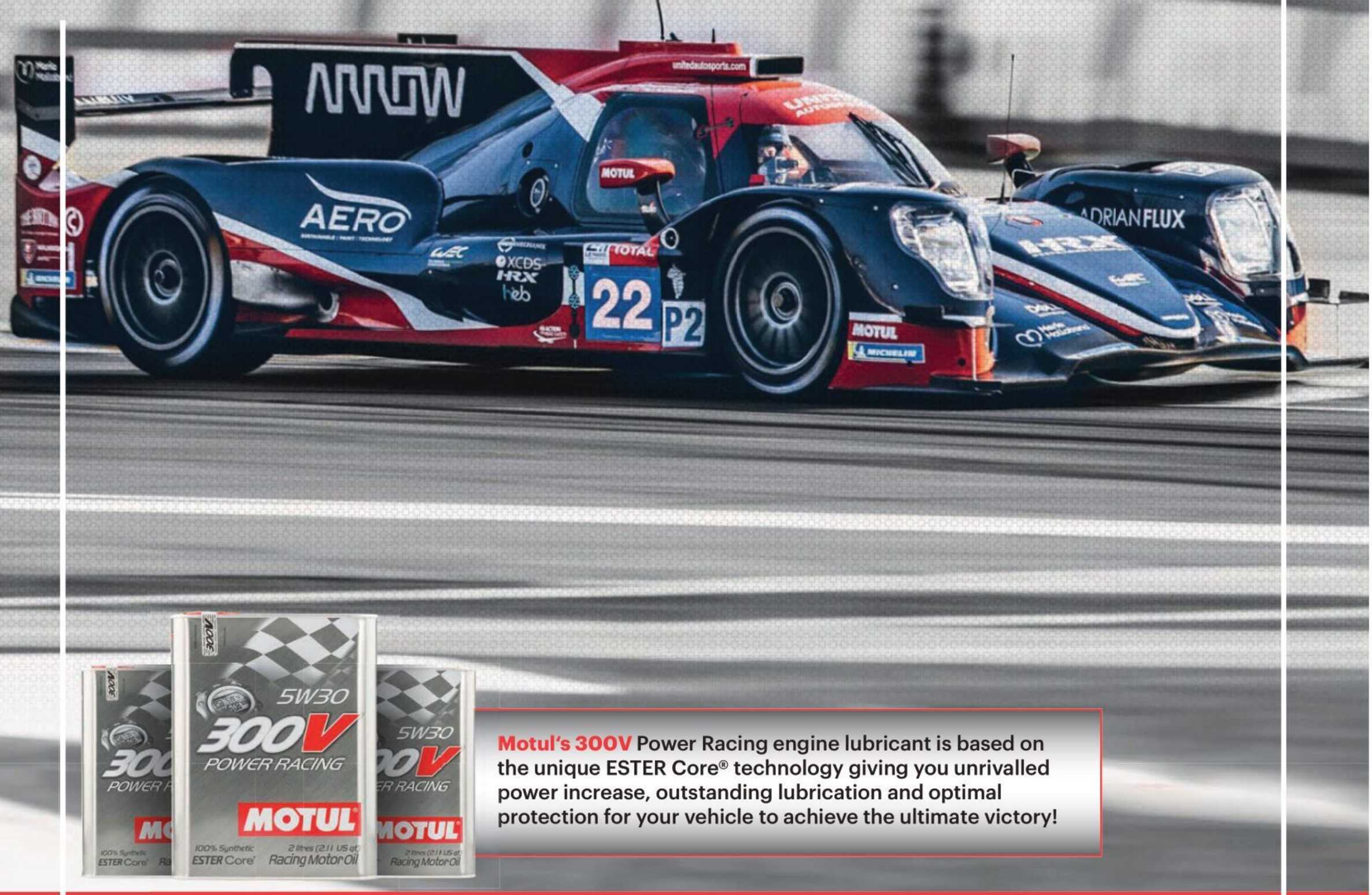

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RALLY NEWS

ARGYLL ORAGNISERS THANKFUL FOR GRACIOUS LOCAL COMMUNITY

One thousand spectators lined the streets for the first glimpse of rallying action in 2021 in a new initiative

Photos: Eddie Kelly, Allan Scott

Town centre run was a success

By John Fife

Mull Car Club is "grateful" for all the local support it received to organise the recent Argyll Rally, a brand-new closed-road rally with a town-centre stage organised during the Covid crisis.

Clerk of the course Chris Woodcock admitted: "I suppose the Covid crisis helped us in some ways. It allowed us to get on and do things without the distractions of other events going on, but it did hinder us at times too."

The event began with two quick blasts through Dunoon town centre. Woodcock continued: "We hadn't actually planned a town-centre stage for the inaugural event but Dunoon Presents, the Council's tourist body, were keen and we have enjoyed a good relationship with Argyll & Bute Council over the years with the Mull Rally.

"We've also been very grateful for the police support under chief inspector David Quinn, but he too knows us well from the Mull Rally."

Environmental Health didn't put any blocks in the way either but were very cautious. On that basis, the organisers had provided some facilities for spectators. "We counted in 1000 spectators on Friday night," Woodcock explained. "We had capacity for 1800, although if we can get rid of Covid we reckon we could accommodate 6-8000 spectators at the rally."

Looking ahead there is potential for changes to be made. "There are other roads," said Woodcock, "but they could be even faster – so we'd need more chicanes!"

JUNIOR EWAN TINDALL AIMING FOR MORE GIANT-KILLING PERFORMANCES IN SCOTLAND

Ewan Tindall is targeting the Junior Scottish Rally Championship title and a few more "stand-out performances" after a strong showing on the recent Argyll Rally.

Tindall – on his first event in an R2T Ford Fiesta – finished 23rd overall and comfortably first in class on Argyll but would've been up in 18th had it not been for a one-minute penalty for nudging a chicane.

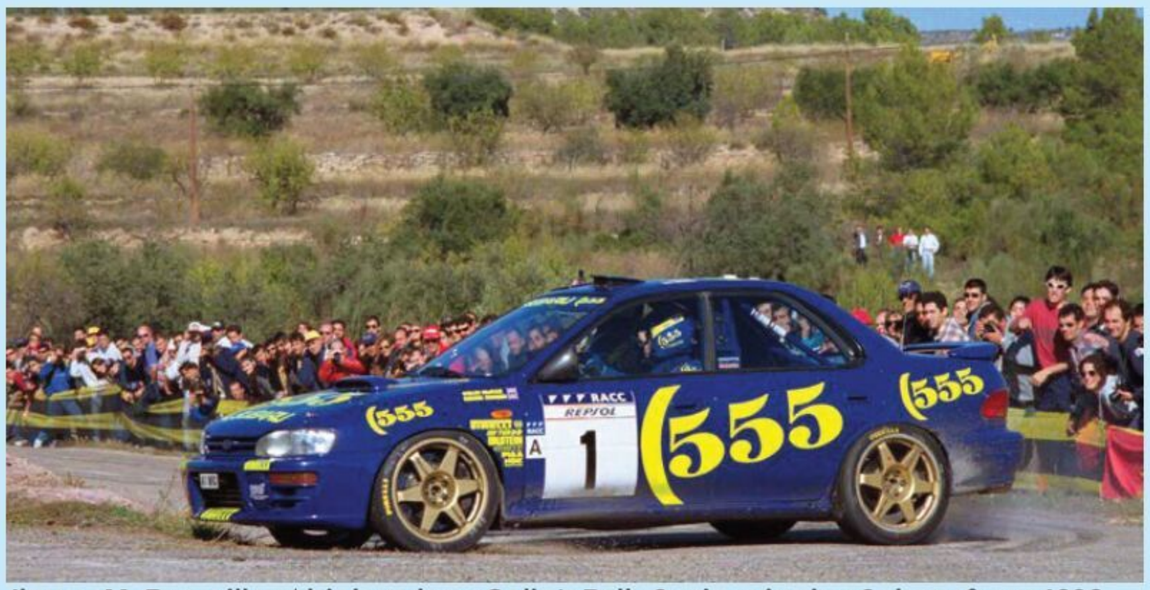
"The result was great, I can't get over how well that new car gets down the road, it's such a good car," Tindall told MN. "There's definitely more to come. [I'm] looking forward to getting her into the forests and seeing what we can do there where we're a little bit more experienced."

Tindall is concentrating on the SRC this season instead of the BTRDA like previously as "the rounds are good" and "they're quite close to home".

He said: "The aim is to win anything we enter, the SRC obviously has the Junior category which we won at [Argyll] so that's something we want to try and carry on.

"[Let's] have a good battle with the two-wheel-drive Ford Escorts in the forests, see what we can do against them and just try and put a few stand-out performances in."

Tindall was one of the stars of the show on the Argyll Rally



Jimmy McRae will get his hands on Colin's Rally Spain-winning Subaru from 1996

A HOST OF PRODRIVE TREATS HEAD FOR GOODWOOD DEMO

Jimmy McRae will pilot the Subaru Impreza his legendary son Colin drove during the 1996 WRC season as part of Prodrive's celebration of four decades in motorsport at the Goodwood Festival of Speed this weekend.

McRae Sr, a five-time British rally champion, is scheduled to drive N1 WRC, which Colin McRae used to win Rally Catalunya in 1996, when the Prodrive-run Subaru team clinched a second consecutive makes' crown.

Prodrive boss David Richards will also be present to co-drive Ari Vatanen in one of the Ford Escort Mk2s they used to win the World Rally Championship 40 years ago.

The car has just undergone two years of restoration at Richards' behest and its Goodwood outing will mark the first time it has run in anger since then. Vatanen crashed the car into a wall on Rallye Sanremo in 1981.

Nine-time WRC title winner Sebastien Loeb is down to demo the Prodrive Hunter T1 he drove to fifth place on the Dakar Rally in Saudi Arabia back in January for the Bahrain Raid Xtreme team.

Several Prodrive-built rally cars will also be on static display, including L555 BAT, which Colin McRae drove to the World title on the RAC Rally in 1995.

MILNE FEELS ARGYLL WAS HIS BEST PERFORMANCE TO DATE

Scottish Rally Championship leader Freddie Milne feels his Argyll Rally performance was the best he's ever produced in a rally car.

Milne was quickest on six of the event's 13 stages in a Ford Fiesta R5 but was judged to have clipped an SS7 chicane which incurred him a one-minute penalty. He still won the SRC section of the event for the first time in his career but was dumped to third overall.

"A lot of the other rallies I want to get seat time, I want to get experience, but I don't want to crash the car, so I'm willing to take risks. But when it comes to the Scottish championship, as I said to Pat [Walsh, co-driver] I was like 'na I'm on a charge here." Milne told MN before agreeing it was his finest drive so far.

"I normally make a lot of mistakes and didn't really put a foot wrong. That's probably one of the sorest things about the chicane [penalty] as after what happened to Melvyn [Evans] he pulled out, I had the thought 'right we've got a good lead now, whenever we get to a chicane we'll be practically at a stop and just roll round now and not have any trouble.'"

●*See page 27 for an analysis of how chicanes defined the Argyll Rally*

Milne said he was error-free on the recent Argyll Rally

Photos: mkpics.net, Hal Ridge, Colin Casserley

Long-distance traveller: McDonald from Scotland won out

McDONALD CLAIMS SECOND POINTS TITLE BUT TAKES A STEP BACK

English points winner has decided to cherry-pick future Hot Rod events

By Graham Brown

Scot Rob McDonald won the National Hot Rods English points crown at Ipswich on Saturday – and has promptly decided to take a break from racing.

The Vauxhall Tigra man won the title by finishing in second spot in the final at Ipswich to add to his points victory in 2014

He said: "I'm going to have a break now. I'd always planned to take things easier after the 2019 World Final but then I went and won it! But I'm not going to race now until the Nationals [in August].

"To me the World [series] is finished now until the race actually happens; after that I'm going to go back to my original plan of just picking and choosing certain meetings. So I'm going to stick by my guns with that; I'm not even going to Buxton later this month."

With rival Billy Wood failing to finish either heat at the Foxhall Heath arena last weekend, the points fight in the final came down to a straightforward McDonald and Chris Haird shoot out.

"Yes, it all fell apart for Billy," said McDonald. "He seemed to get caught up in everything, same as me at the last meeting! It was a good race with Chris in the final but he was quicker so I just let him go in the end.

"There was no point in both of us crashing out or something and, to be fair, Chris would be the same with me. There's loads of respect between us, that's just the way we are."

O'DONOVAN TO GRADUATE TO NEW RX2e CATEGORY FOR 2021

Seventeen-year-old Patrick O'Donovan will graduate into the international rallycross stage this year as the youngest driver in the brand-new FIA RX2e category within the World Rallycross Championship roster.

RX150 Rallycross points leader O'Donovan began racing in 2014 in the Junior RX division of the British Rallycross Championship and switched to the RX150 category late last year.

He is so-far unbeaten in the class, having book-ended the 2020 and 2021 seasons with a pair of wins in each campaign. Now O'Donovan, son of 2007 British RX title-winner Ollie, will race in the new single-specification RX2e class for all-electric that will support World RX at five weekends this year. "Ever since I was a young child my dream has been to be in the World RX paddock as a driver, so I'm so excited that the dream will become reality this year," said O'Donovan.

The four-wheel-drive RX2e cars generate 250kW (335bhp) of power and 510Nm torque. A number of winners from the internal combustion engine form of the series will compete in the opening round in Barcelona later this month, including Belgian Guilleume de Ridder, Finn Jesse Kallio and Jamaican Fraser McConnell.

"This is an opportunity of a lifetime and one I plan to work hard to make the most of," O'Donovan said. "I feel ready, although I know I am much less experienced than all of the other drivers on the grid. I want to get the best results I can."

O'Donovan previously sampled an ICE RX2 car at Loheac in France in 2019, and is testing an RX2e car for the first time at Calafat in Spain this week.

O'Donovan will race RX2e car

BENNETT EXPANDS PROGRAMME INTO NITRO AND WORLD RX

Bennett wants to get his elbows out in his Mini

Xite Racing driver Oliver Bennett will compete in a selection of World Rallycross Championship and Nitro Rallycross events this year.

Having so far competed in the opening two rounds of Extreme E this year, 28-year-old Bennett will race his team's BMW Mini in the opening round of the World RX series in Spain later this month, and is also expected to race in the next two rounds as part of a double-header weekend at the Nurburgring in Germany a week after the Catalan opener.

Following that event however, Bennett's car will be shipped to America to contest the five-round Nitro Rallycross series, which begins with an opening round in Salt Lake City in September.

He explained: "Extreme E is amazing, but the nature of the courses we race on means there's not always as much cut-and-thrust racing as I would want. That's definitely not the case with rallycross.

"I love the close nature of the racing in rallycross. There's never a dull moment. I'm excited to be back in Spain. Because of coronavirus, Spain was the only World RX round I competed in last year."

TIMERZYANOV TO REJOIN THE WORLD RX TRAIL FOR START OF SEASON

Triple European Rallycross champion Timur Timerzyanov has placed a late entry to race in the opening round of the World Rallycross Championship in Spain later this month, in a third Hyundai i20 from the GRX-SET squad.

Timeryzanov doesn't plan to contest a full campaign this year, but will line-up for the season opener alongside permanent GRX-SET d rivers Niclas Gronholm and Krisztian Szabo, having raced for the team for three consecutive seasons so far.

"Rallycross has always been such a big part of my life," said the 34-year-old Russian. "But, the world has obviously changed a lot over the past year, and that in-turn has led to sponsors reevaluating their priorities and adopting different philosophies. It didn't look like I would make the grid at all in 2021. We only have an agreement for Barcelona at the moment, but if the opportunity presents itself to enter more rounds, I will."

Timerzyanov is one of only three drivers – together with former champion Timmy Hansen and seven-time event winner Andreas Bakkerud – to have raced in all 71 World RX rounds since 2014.

While Hansen will also race in Barcelona, Bakkerud hasn't secured a full-time drive for this season.

Timerzyanov: World RX

BRISCA F1: BUXTON RACEWAY BY COLIN CASSERLEY JULY 3

Sargent hit the front early on at Buxton and stayed there

SARGENT MAJORS TO REVENGE DEFEAT AT BUXTON

Ten days ago, Finn Sargent missed out on a final win on the last lap of the race when second place driver Will Hunter nudged him out of the race.

Last weekend, Sargent left nothing to chance by dominating the race and leaving his closes rivals in the distance.

Shortly after the drop of the green flag, Sargent barged his way into the lead with Catherine Harris in pursuit. As Sargent began to draw away from the pack Shaun Webster moved into second place, a position he would hold until the end of the race.

Harris was overtaken by Karl Hawkins in the closing stages, and she lost fourth place on the final turn when Frankie Wainman Jr punted her wide.

Winner Sargent said: "I seem to have found a gear or two extra over the last few weeks.

"To be honest I thought I drove better last week, but this is some points in the bag."

Although she just missed out on a podium place in the final, Harris chalked up a win in the Grand National, her second win of the night following an earlier heart race win. It gives her enough World championship qualifying points to put her is a strong position to qualify for the semi-finals.

With only two qualifying rounds remaining Harris' older brother and the defending world champion Tom Harris leads the points charts.

The final rounds to come next weekend at Bradford and Sheffield, with the World Final to be staged at Bradford in September.

Results

Organiser: Buxton Raceway, BriSCA F1 **When:** July 3 **Where:** Buxton Raceway **Starters:** 39.
1 Finn Sargent; 2 Shaun Webster; 3 Karl Hawkins; 4 Frankie Wainman Jr; 5 Catherine Harris; 6 Bobby Griffin; 7 Mat Newson; 8 Eddie Collins; 9 Lee Fairhurst; 10 Danny Wainman.

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Heartbreak for Evans as the World champion turns the screw in tough African event

OGIER TAKES ADVANTAGE AS EVANS SLIPS UP ON SAFARI RALLY

Evans was left ruing a missed chance

By Graham Lister

Ogier took his fourth victory of the season

FORMULA 1

RED BULL GOES ON THE RAMPAGE IN AUSTRIA

Max has that winning feeling once more p4

NATIONAL RALLYING

GUNNING FOR THE MN RALLY GLORY

We look ahead to Circuit Rally showdown p27

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HISTORICS

DOWN THE WORKSHOP

1969 FORMULA 5000 LOLA T142

Current owner: Roger Deans

Still going strong at 52 years

It was an early F5000
Roger Deans says: "It was new in March 1969, just when Formula 5000 was starting in the UK. It was owned by Fraser Racing and driven by Keith Holland in the 1969 season. I think it was fourth in the championship that year and also won the Madrid Grand Prix at Jarama, which was a mixed race for Formula 1 and Formula 5000 cars."

It ended up on a TV programme
"It made its name by winning that race at Jarama and then it tended to fade out into the background as the older cars couldn't keep up with the next generation of Formula 5000s. John Peskett owned it for some time and then it went out of fashion and stood for ages. It later went to the *Salvage Squad* programme on the BBC."

He bought it later
"And they rebuilt it, supposedly. It went to auction after that and the chap who bought it, they say he had to spend as much as he paid for it to get it right. He'd got a number of cars and used to race quite a bit. But then, for some reason I don't know, he wanted to sell most of his cars. I bought it in 2006, so I've had it for 15 years."

He does hillclimbs
"In September 2006 I entered a meeting at Shelsley. That was the first meeting and I've run it pretty much ever since up until last year, which was a bit of a wash out. I did Pistons and Props last autumn, which was the only thing we did last year. I used to do sprints but I haven't done any sprints in this, only hillclimbs."

It's big car for the smaller hills
"I don't use any more than two gears on the hills, just first and second. I can't get a lower first [gear ratio]. It does about 82mph in first and second is about 112mph. You don't really need any more. It's a toss-up at Shelsley but it's not worth taking third gear. They weren't really built for hillclimbing, they are too big. It creates a lot of interest and it's a big old beast on the hills. It is a challenge and I get a lot of pleasure from it."

Photos: Paul Lawrence

Dave Wright will drive Ford Focus at Shelsley

STAR CARS LINED UP TO HEADLINE CLASSIC NOSTALGIA WEEKEND AT SHELSLEY WALSH

A glittering line-up, including record-breaking car, to wow fans at iconic venue

By Paul Lawrence

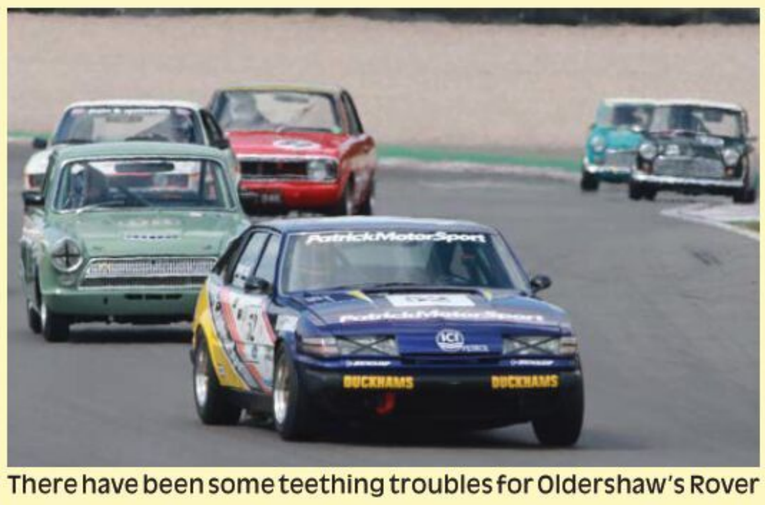
A capacity entry of over 40 period rally cars will headline the annual Classic Nostalgia event at Shelsley Walsh on both Saturday and Sunday, July 17-18.

The rally cars will be in action on the famous hillclimb course on both Saturday and Sunday, many of them running competitively.

The Ralli22 movement has assembled a stellar entry of Group B, Group A and early WRC cars, topped by the ever-spectacular Dave Wright (Ford Focus WRC), Will Nicholls (Subaru Impreza WRC), Rob Whitehouse (Lancia 037) and Dave Kedward (Peugeot 205 T16). Marcus Willis will run his ex-Sebastien Loeb Citroen C4 WRC on an invitation basis.

One of the star cars of the weekend will be the Subaru Impreza in which Richard Burns won the 2000 Safari Rally, and it will be driven by Paul Howarth who worked closely with Burns at Prodrive. The car will celebrate the 20th anniversary of Burns' WRC title. A range of star cars will take to the hill during two days of hillclimbing with demonstration runs from the ex-Peter Gethin McLaren M10B Formula 5000, the ex-Pedro Rodriguez BRM P154 Can-Am and the 'Beast of Turin', the 1911 Fiat S76 land speed record contender. Meanwhile, Mark Harrison will provide a DFV soundtrack with his 1979 ex-Elio de Angelis Shadow DN9B.

One of the most famous cars from Shelsley Walsh will be present in the form of ERA R4D in which Raymond Mays set fastest time of the day no fewer than 16 times between 1935 and 1956.



There have been some teething troubles for Oldershaw's Rover

Oldershaw steps from Lola into a Rover SD1

Robert Oldershaw Jr has joined the Historic Touring Car Challenge from Motor Racing Legends with an ex-Brian Muir Rover SD1.

Oldershaw, better known in recent times for racing Sports 2000s and a Group 6 Lola sports-racer in historics, started his racing in a Rover 216 GTI which he took over from his father, Robert Sr.

They bought the touring car from Martin Thomas, who ran it in the early 1980s in the British Saloon Car Championship for Muir and Win Percy. It was also raced by Dave Brodie in the Tourist Trophy at Silverstone.

A debut run at Donington Park in early May ended when a tyre blew and pitched it into the gravel, while differential issues kept it off the grid at Thruxton in mid-June. "It's considerably different to the Lola," admitted Oldershaw. "We're still learning a lot, but I loved them in period."

Shaw swaps to Morgan for Road Sports attack

Former Porsche 911 racer John Shaw has traded up to a Morgan +8 for this year's Historic Road Sports Championship.

The series champion has acquired the car used by Keith Ahlers in the Spa Classic Six-Hours after 11 seasons in his Porsche. "I was either going to retire or try something new," said Shaw, who had a debut run in the car at Cadwell Park in early June. "It's got nice history: qualifying was the first time I'd driven it, so that was a big learning weekend."

For now the car is being tended by RW Racing Services alongside '70s Roads Sports' frontrunning +8s of Will Plant and Kevin Kivlochan.

Retirement is on hold for Shaw

Back from the hills: Reprepared Chevron

CHEVRON RETURNS TO THE TRACKS AFTER NEARLY 30 YEARS AWAY

A Formula 2 Chevron B25 not raced for nearly three decades made a return to racing at Donington Park in the hands of Andrew Tart.

Originally sold to Campbell Graham in Scotland in 1973, the car was later raced by Iain McLaren and Jimmy Jack before being owned by Richard Budge for more than a decade.

It has been owned by hillclimber Keith Harris since 2002 but finally returned to racing in the Aurora Trophy with Tart, who reprepared it for racing.

"It's really a circuit car," said Harris of the two-litre BDG powered car, which had taken him to fastest times of the day at Shelsley Walsh and was used in European hillclimbs.

IN BRIEF

Ahrens on track
Karter Joseph Ahrens made his car debut at Donington Park, taking a fifth place in Classic FF1600 in the Van Diemen RF80 owned by Richard Tarling. The 20-year-old Londoner, who is not related to 1960s German F2 racer Kurt, hopes to do the rest of the Classic FF1600 season after an encouraging debut under the wing of Tarling and Linton Stutely at Enigma Motorsport.

Harrison to F2
Teenager Samuel Harrison hopes to join the F2 grid at the Silverstone Classic at the end of July in a Lola T240, which will start off running in Formula Atlantic trim. "It is a work in progress but the classic at Silverstone is certainly our target," said Harrison, who has made his name so far in Classic and Historic Formula Ford.

Corse, of course
The organisers of the Historic Tour de Corse filled the event entry of over 300 cars in just three weeks after a record response to the island-based event. Running from October 3-9 on the French island, the event features competition, regularity and legend sections and has drawn entries from 12 countries.

Tarling's battle
Leading Formula Ford racer Richard Tarling continues on his journey to full fitness after catching Covid in March 2020. Tarling is still battling with long Covid and says he is making progress after nearly 18 months, but he's still not fully fit and ready to race again. "I'm hoping to get out and at least do some testing later this year," said Tarling.

Storer steps up
Regular Historic Formula Ford 2000 racer Andrew Storer has added a Formula 2 Chevron B34 to his stable and has done a couple of races in the Aurora Trophy this season. "I've had it three years but only raced it for the first time at Silverstone in May," said Storer who bought the car from David Gathercole. "It was a Formula Atlantic car in 1976."

Return for Bailey
After an 18-year sabbatical, Nick Bailey returned to racing at Donington Park recently in his Sports 2000 Royale S2000M in the Thundersports races. Bailey had not raced since doing Clubmans in 2003. The car was originally a works-owned chassis and was later owned and raced by Andrew Colley. "It's fantastic to be back. I spent most of the Covid year getting the car ready," said Bailey.

FF2000 is busy
The Historic Formula Ford 2000 pack will have two heats and a final on the Brands Hatch Indy circuit on Friday to kick off the Legends of Brands Super Prix. There will then be a single race on the GP circuit on Saturday after another qualifying session for a capacity grid of the slicks-and-wings single-seaters.

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FEATURE

HOW RED BULL HAS MANAGED TO HALT THE MERCEDES SILVERWASH

Why the Milton Keynes team has been ultra-smart behind the scenes, by James Roberts

A familiar 2021 sight: Max getting the edge over Lewis

The champion Hamilton and the champion-in-waiting, Verstappen

How much can you remember of the 2013 Formula 1 season? Many will be able to recall the famous 'Multi 21' team order that Red Bull's Sebastian Vettel ignored in the heat of Malaysia. But, eight years on, the final half of the year is more of a blur in the memory.

A check of the record books reveals that Vettel and Red Bull won nine races… *in a row*.. From Spa in August through to Brazil in November, the Milton Keynes outfit was the dominant force in Formula 1. It was untouchable as Vettel romped to his fourth World title.

Why is this relevant? Because until two weeks ago, it was the last time any team other than Mercedes had taken four consecutive race wins in F1. The final GP of 2013 at Interlagos was the last for the 2.4-litre V8 engine. The new turbo hybrid engine formula was on the horizon, as was Mercedes' ascent into a period of domination.

Red Bull has waited a long time to return to the top spot and success is sweeter as it has avenged the opponent that knocked it off its perch. As the fight intensifies between these old foes, the language being used off-track is particularly telling. In the last few races as Max Verstappen has crossed the finish line in first place, team boss Christian Horner has come on the radio to talk of "pay back" and a desire to "keep turning the screw."

For each race Red Bull ran faultlessly, so the cracks start to appear in the once-invincible Mercedes armour. Whether that's Valtteri Bottas giving his team an expletive-laden tirade about strategy or Lewis Hamilton making unforced errors on-track: such as slithering off at Imola, or by accidentally hitting his brake balance button at the restart in Baku.

From the Monaco Grand Prix onwards, Red Bull has had the quicker car. At the first Austrian race, the advantage had grown to 0.2s a lap, thanks to another raft of in-season upgrades. While there is still a long way to go in this title fight, it appears at this stage Red Bull has the upper hand. But how has it been able to turn the tables this year?

Where is Red Bull quicker than Merc?

While this year's cars are a carry-over from 2020, they all had to undergo a small, but significant, change to comply with new regulations. In a bid to reduce speeds, the FIA mandated that an area of the floor, in front of the rear wheels, was to be reprofiled and made smaller.

This small tweak to cut downforce has appeared to have impacted the cars that run a lower rake (ie: those which have the rear of the car closer to the ground) such as the Mercedes and Aston Martin.

In contrast, the Red Bull runs a higher rake so that more air goes through the diffuser at the back of the car to generate downforce. With this different design concept, Red Bull has discovered there has been scope to develop their diffuser to improve performance – while Mercedes has struggled to extract additional gains in this area.

At the Styrian Grand Prix, the RB16B's diffuser was modified with a serrated edge, dubbed the 'shark's teeth.'

Although a version of this was used in practice at Monaco, several van loads of parts arrived at the Red Bull Ring to upgrade the car. The knock-on effect of the additionally generated downforce was that Verstappen could now run a smaller rear wing.

As a result, drag was reduced and the Red Bull was faster in a straight line, while not being compromised in the corners.

A number of times Hamilton had queried the pace of Verstappen on the straight and referenced a Honda engine upgrade. But as power units are homologated, performance-related changes are forbidden.

"I listen with interest to some of the theories Lewis has and sometimes they are some way from reality," said Horner in Austria. "We run a lower wing, less drag and we tend to go quicker down the straight. I think Toto Wolff should explain this to his driver…"

Horner is used to the criticism

"There is a lot being directed at us…"

Christian Horner

Photos: Motorsport Images

"We will fight for every single result"

Toto Wolff

Wolff: looking ahead to 2022

Is Mercedes focusing more on next year?

Red Bull's pursuit of upgrades on its 2021 car was another area that came under scrutiny from Hamilton in the wake of his defeat at the first Austrian race. He asked publicly if Red Bull was spending more money than Mercedes on this year's machine and whether that would compromise its plans for 2022. In contrast, he said he would "love an upgrade" and added "but I don't think it's in the pipeline at the moment."

Wolff has admitted Merc's focus is now on next year's machine. A wholesale change in the regulations was delayed a year due to the pandemic, but the 2022 regulations will be completely different. With a move to ground effect aerodynamics and larger wheels, the dramatic reset could radically alter the competitive order. Mercedes is nervous about losing its advantage, particularly as Hamilton has just signed to continue with the team for the next two years.

In addition there is a further rule change to balance as spending limits have been reigned in. Now each squad has a maximum of £105m to spend this season, reducing to £100m in 2022.

So while Hamilton is calling for more upgrades to compete in this championship fight, Mercedes doesn't believe the time or financial benefit is worth it.

"The upgrades we'd bring wouldn't close the deficit of the magnitude that these new aerodynamic regulations cost us," says Wolff. "It would make no sense to put a week or month back on the current car because the gains wouldn't be anywhere near what we are making on the 2022 car.

"Red Bull have bought trucks with new parts – and fair enough – it's a strategy and one that is proving successful as it stands, but even they will stop aero development at a certain stage as it will be dangerous for next year's championship."

Clipping Red Bull's wings

It's fairly common for the governing body to step in and issue technical directives or tweak the regulations either on grounds of safety or to ensure clarity in the regulations. Last season Mercedes developed its Dual Axis Steering (DAS) system to help with tyre temperatures. It was initially protested by Red Bull when it was first used last year and, while it was given the green light, DAS was ultimately banned for 2022.

And while there hasn't been a formal protest, Mercedes did threaten to query Red Bull's rear wing, which appeared to flex under load on the straight at the Spanish Grand Prix. Since then, more stringent tests have been put in place by the FIA to reign in how much wings appear to move. And whenever Red Bull's rear wing gets mentioned, Horner is quick to reference Mercedes' front wing…

"I think a lot of noise was made about the rear wing," says Horner. "New tests were introduced and the car has fully complied with those rules at all times – but it would be disingenuous of the FIA not to look at the front wing in the same way. And of course, we've seen footage across recent races and we're looking for consistency."

Another one of the sensible decisions in the midst of the Covid-19 outbreak, in parallel with the budget cap, was to bring an end to the development of pit equipment. In recent years, Mercedes has tended not to focus too much on the rapid turnaround in pitstops, as it has enjoyed such a healthy on-track advantage.

In contrast, Red Bull has invested heavily into intricate kit. It holds the record for the fastest-ever pitstop in F1 – 1.82 seconds – and has eight of the 10 fastest pit stops of the season so far. Mercedes queried the super-human pace of the stops and so the FIA has stepped in once more. A lengthy technical directive says that from the Hungarian Grand Prix onwards, a tiny reaction time margin will be introduced to slow stops down and ensure safety is not compromised.

"We've had the majority of fastest stops during the year and it's not by accident," adds Horner. "It's the duty of the competitor to ensure that the car is safe and the penalty for a wheel not being fixed is that you have to stop the car immediately.

"So what the technical directive is trying to achieve, I'm not quite sure, because I think there's an awful lot of complexity to it. Formula 1 is about innovation and competition and seeing pitstops in sub-two seconds is a remarkable feat and we should be encouraging it, not trying to control it.

"If you can't be beaten then obviously the most logical thing is for your competitors to try to slow you down, and that's obviously what's happening here. You can see there's an awful lot of pointed activity in our direction at the moment, but it's something that we're used to."

Who will emerge victorious?

At the time of writing, only nine of the 23 rounds have been held. And as the pandemic continues to play havoc around the world, there is no guarantee that every race on the calendar will go ahead. Turkey has already been dropped from the schedule once, to be given a reprieve in place of Singapore. When considering whether Hamilton or Verstappen will emerge victorious, with the pace of the two so equal, it's likely that reliability will play a significant factor.

From the way Hamilton is driving, you can sense he is conscious of that. When Verstappen stormed down the inside to take the lead at the start at Imola and Spain – and even his penultimate-lap overtake to win in France – Hamilton didn't want to risk turning in and picking up damage. Second place and fastest lap is only six points fewer than victory. That's why the Baku error after Verstappen had retired with a puncture was such a missed opportunity.

Mechanical reliability across the field is high, but when you add into the mix the three new sprint qualifying races this year, mileage and the chance of wheel-to-wheel contact increases.

"It's incredibly tight. It's such small margins, session-to-session, race-to-race, that's what makes it so exciting," says Horner of the 2021 duel. "I think that's what's motivated everybody within the team, within the factory and there's a buzz walking into the factory on Monday morning, you just feel that energy."

After an eight-year wait, could Red Bull finally wrestle its crown back from Mercedes? "The fight is still fully on," says Wolff in reply. "This is far from over. We will be fighting as much as we can for every single result." ■

Red Bull has worked on its rear diffuser for 2021

Steps have been taken to slow down pitstops

Hamilton's error in Baku could yet prove crucial

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FEATURE

Some 100 young competitors are learning in the Academy

UK MOTORSPORT'S ACADEMY AWARDS

Motorsport UK offers a competitors' development pathway from the grassroots right to the very top, and Graham Keilloh finds out all about it

F4 US racer Emily Linscott is benefiting from Team UK Futures

Last year's Sakhir Grand Prix brought home for Katie Baldwin, competitors pathway manager of governing body Motorsport UK, just what the Motorsport UK Academy could lay claim to.

She tells Motorsport News: "When Lewis Hamilton had his positive Covid test, George Russell was drafted into the Mercedes squad and Jack Aitken took the reins for Williams and we also had Lando Norris, all on the track at the same time. And [the] three have all come through the academy.

"That's a really significant moment that sums up the desire to produce and provide support to those who make a career out of it and make it to the top.

"Then to look at across other areas of the sport, we've got Chris Ingram and Elfyn Evans: Elfyn is a graduate of the programme and Chris is still associated with the programme and his co-driver Ross Whittock, he was also [on the] co-driver strand."

The Motorsport UK Academy is the governing body's talent development pathway covering racing and rallying, including co-driving. It selects the UK's most promising competitors to equip them with the tools and attributes needed to prevail.

The academy's trajectory can be traced to 2005, when the then-MSA started externally run race and rally elite programmes, overseen by David Brabham and Robert Reid. In 2009 the academy umbrella was created, run then by Greg Symes, and the programme was brought fully in-house by the governing body in 2013.

"[In] 2005 they had around six drivers on each programme, the rally elite and race elite," Baldwin explains. "Now we've got just about 100 drivers across four programmes."

This year it added the likes of reigning champions Sandy Mitchell from British GT, Luke Browning from British Formula 4 and Harry King from the Porsche Carrera Cup GB.

The four programmes start with the Enhanced DiSE (that's 'Diploma in Sporting Excellence'), a bespoke Sport England-backed two-year course that includes motorsport, sporting, business and motor vehicle elements, for those at the grassroots, club and junior level. It is delivered with Loughborough College.

There's then Team UK Futures followed by Team UK, wherein identified potential talent is developed with highly qualified coaches and increasingly on a one-to-one basis with an allocated performance manager. Finally there is the Podium Programme, for academy 'graduates' to access support. "What makes the academy unique is we run these programmes independently so we have no financial vested interest or commercial interest, and athletes don't pay to be on these programmes," Baldwin adds.

"We offer exclusive industry insight, specialist workshops, education sessions and they're all aimed at developing all-round performance. The academy tries to provide the tools and skills to develop a well-rounded athlete but also a well-rounded member of society."

Mitchell for one, who started on the Loughborough College rung, vouches for the academy. "For me it was important because it's a crucial age as a young driver when you're 17, 18, 19. If you can impress at those ages then it can really move you forward in your career," he tells MN.

"But it's also the same time where you're finishing up A-levels and looking maybe to go to university, it gave me two or three years where, with it being only

Williams gets one-to-one help

"Once I heard all about it it was a no brainer"

Harry Rice

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Amy Lentz Photography

British GT champion Mitchell is an advocate

Co-driver Cameron Fair (l) gets tailored learning

six-to-eight days a month in actual college and doing a lot of the work from home, it gave me the flexibility to be able to do a good job of education but also my motorsport rather than one taking a bit of a back-seat role."

The part-time and flexible college course means it fits neatly around competition. Harry Rice, a Junior Saloon competitor and DiSE student, tells MN: "It's the only course in the country that actually tailors to us as drivers. [It] allows us time off to test, to race, and they actually have an entire part of the course tailored to us as drivers. Once I heard everything about it was a no brainer."

The academy's mentoring element also gets universal praise. Podium member Ingram for one has a long-time relationship with academy coach James Wozencroft. Ingram says: "Young drivers most of the time don't have anyone or many people to talk to about stuff and learn stuff from [or to] just talk about competing and performance and all the elements, because it's not something you can really do with family or with people outside of the sport.

"James and the other coaches have got mega experience which can be really helpful. [It's] personal support and a sounding board really. And it's good to have a different driver and coach's input."

Team UK rallying co-driver Keaton Williams agrees. He explains: "I worked a lot with Seb Marshall [via the academy], which is a massive thing for me because you can't really sit down and read a book and learn these things. To be able to speak to Seb and go through key areas and even just little bits he picks up on, that's a massive thing. Just having him as a contact in the phone book is a huge help.

"My whole approach to the World Rally Championship has changed since working with Seb, these rallies are massive challenges. Seb was a massive help because I knew what I was getting myself in to."

Much of the academy learning focuses on fitness, nutrition, psychology and physiology, including making use of Porsche Human Performance at its Silverstone base. The regime has continued during lockdown.

Futures co-driver member Cameron Fair says: "I thought I was always quite flexible but I found that I was quite wrong quite quickly! Porsche have been really good, through all lockdown they were giving us an eight-week or 12-week programme about nutrition and exercises and they were giving us home videos to work out and things like that."

Formula 4 United States driver and Futures member Emily Linscott concurs: "The training side of things has made a big difference especially when we're unable to go to gyms it was very tough getting the motivation. They were able to give us training regimes and stuff that were easy to do in the house."

Baldwin adds in a more general sense: "The pandemic has given us an opportunity to actually review what we are delivering and how we can effectively deliver this education and support to the driver. While we have not been able to get people together [in lockdown] we've actually been able to deliver a hell of a lot more virtually and we're going to take that into when we go back to normality."

Rice notes: "For me it's mainly the psychologist that we all get given [that's helped]. Because different people act differently when they're driving, some are very focused on the task at hand, some are quite emotionally connected to the certain ways of driving and it's really helped me to learn how to control the emotions that I get in the car and then turn them into performance."

Those on the academy programme feel indeed the help they get is tailored to them, even at more junior levels where activity is more group based. "The calls are group calls but you're actually able to send in questions which is super great," Linscott says, "As a female, let's say I ask a female-directed question there will be someone there that will know how to answer that."

And this view on tailoring even applies to the co-drivers. Fair tells MN: "I find in motorsport in general navigators get left out a lot but I don't feel like that in the academy, I feel we're very included, and our programme's tailored just to us. It's not just drivers with an add-on of a navigator, everything's finely focused to a navigator."

Academy selection traditionally was via applications, but it is seeking now to be more proactive. Baldwin adds. "Over the past 18 months or so I've looked to take a more collaborative approach with our community. Across the season we've viewed the performances and results and that kind of thing, then we also liaise with the championship and coordinators and other stakeholders and partners who we invite to nominate suitable candidates and then we form a selection panel."

The academy seeks to provide tools for when competing and not

Money, money, money...

In motorsport there is a common bottom line, particularly for up and comers.

When asked how the Motorsport UK Academy could be improved, British GT racer Sandy Mitchell tells Motorsport News: "I don't want to say that they should supply funding because it's not an easy thing!"

Rally man Chris Ingram is more animated on the subject on what more could be done to help British talent. "It's controversial to say but in foreign countries the talents who were the most hard working or proven [to have] more ability are supported financially as well as coaching, and without money you're not going to do anything," he says to MN. "And that's the missing piece in British motorsport, especially British rallying. There's no support with that really, you're left on your own and it's the only sport like that nowadays."

Harry Rice reckons the business part of the Academy's DiSE stage could be more tailored to motorsport's unique needs. "It's just your regular A-level that everyone in the country does," says the Junior saloon racer. "If the business course was more tailored to us as drivers to help us towards finding sponsors, to help us towards making bridges with companies, instead of just teaching us the basics of business, [that would be good]."

Ingram: looking for support

Emily Linscott though with Team UK Futures found Academy learning on the subject of cash raising more helpful. "Obviously they can't do any of it for you but it's those little tips and stuff and hearing people's stories on how they do it and little ideas that you get through it is really helpful," she tells MN. "Any sponsorship talk is always good because you're always learning, so we're super lucky to have had people that are experienced in that."

MOTORSPORT UK ACADEMY PROGRESSION

The academy has a four-stage progression

And this is part of a wider academy shift. "[We're] really trying to integrate the academy into the wider community and actually make people feel part of it, feel proud of the academy and take them on a journey with us," Baldwin continues.

"Our vision for the talent pathway is to be part of the strategy to transform the future of motorsport in the UK, and to do this we want to connect the talent pathway with the wider community, form genuine partnerships so we can work together delivering exciting performance development opportunities.

"We've just gone through a rebrand for the academy so we'll be looking forward to sharing that, that will give us a little bit more identity.

"The pandemic's given us an opportunity to really think about the identity, a clear brand, easily identifiable and actually the contribution that the academy can make to the long-term sustainability of motorsport, contributing to Motorsport UK's overall objectives to reach a wider and a younger audience.

"We want them to leave the programme having developed their full potential but ultimately really enjoyed their experience and we hope they'll want to remain part of the sport for many years to come, and also pass on that passion to the next generation." ■

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FEATURE

ALLAN McNISH
I LEARNED TO FOLLOW MY RACING INSTINCTS

The World title-winning sportscar driver tackles the MN readers' posers, by Andy Hallbery

McNish: Climbed to the top of the world

Allan McNish is now a mainstay on the pitwalls of the globe, leading his troops into a battle he has tackled himself on so many occasions.

But it is a position he is happy with, and one that allows him some time to reflect on his decorated career. Here are the McNish headlines: he is the 2013 World Endurance champion, a three-time Le Mans 24 Hour winner, three-time American Le Mans Series champion, Formula 1 test driver with racing legends, and a season racing with Toyota in F1, BBC Radio commentator and now team principal of the Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler Formula E team, as well as a master of the bacon butty. Read on for more details…

He is also one of the nicest people to chat with. So much so, we already have enough for a 'part two' that will come up in early August, so if your question wasn't answered this time keep your eyes out for that.

In McNish's own words: "I'm so old there are a *lot* of stories in there."

Question: You've worked with some legends in racing, everyone from multiple champions Ayrton Senna and Michael Schumacher to Tom Kristensen – and even Mika Hakkinen. Who did you learn most from?

Jamie Moore
Via email

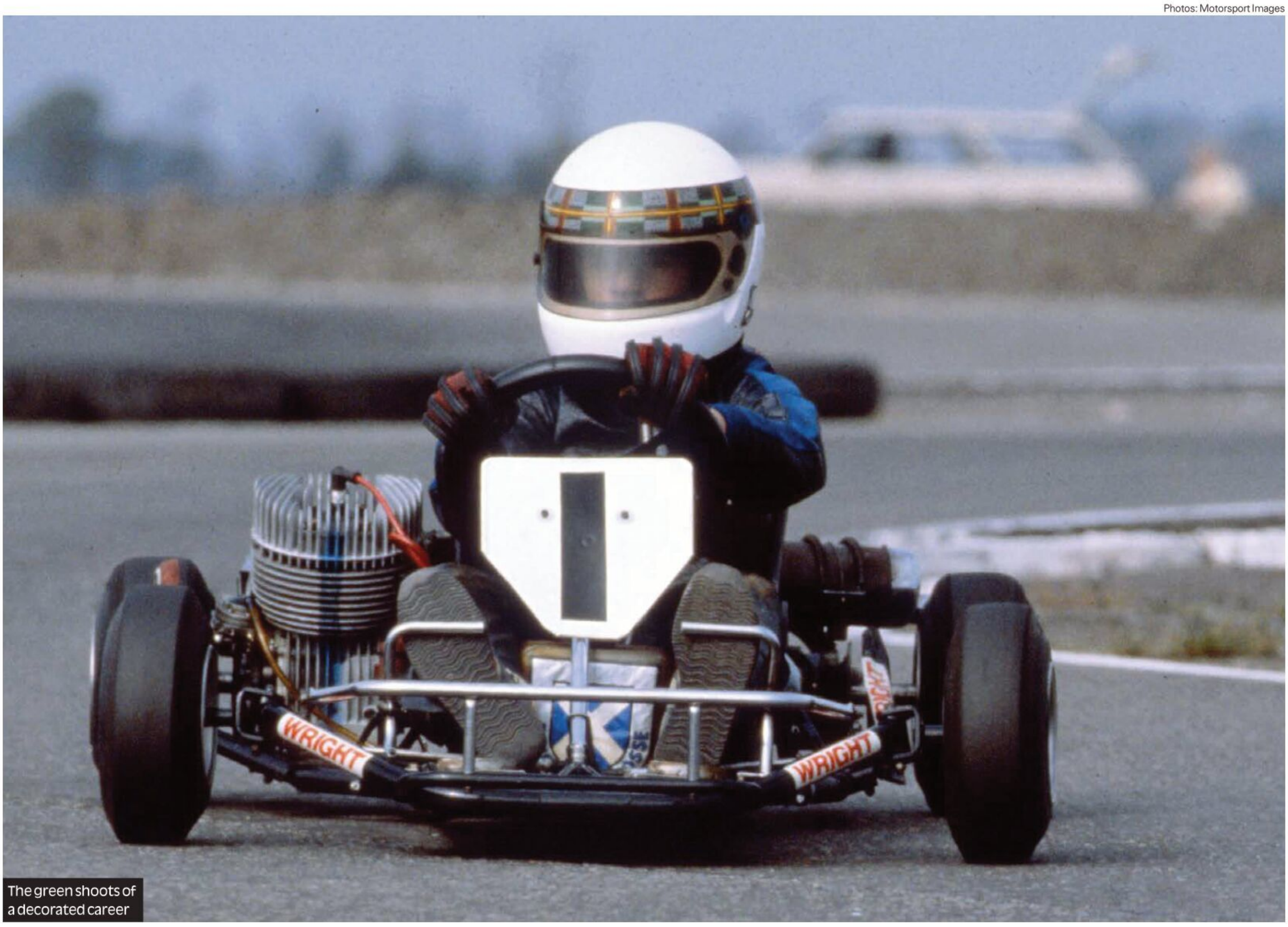
Allan McNish: "Does it have to be a driver? [Very long pause for thought]

"I will give a two-stage answer to that. From a driving point of view and because of a particular scenario, I would have to say Senna. Remember, these were the days [1990-1992] before data. The principal part of data back then was the stopwatch – his driver feedback during testing was a real factor in the development of the car. It was very clear to me that his capability mentally to be able to 'record' what happened during a test, corner by corner, whether it was a race distance or a five-lap run didn't matter. For him he was then to be able to relay that information with enough detail that the engineer could build the story. Nowadays that's a pretty simple task because the data is now all there, live.

"When I think back now, that was a key point for me because for me it was very much, yes, you had to deliver information on the car, but that was to a limited extent. Senna's was to a significantly different level. That's where I realised that the benchmark was clearly quite different to where I thought it was. I learned a lot from that.

"In terms of what I do now, I have to say [former Audi Sport boss] Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. I learned a tremendous amount from him at Audi. He is a very strong character, but also a very thoughtful person. He is just a really nice human being. At the end of the day, it's not just about racing for a couple of hours on a Sunday. The rest of it is a form of big business in one format or another. There are the people working behind the scenes

Photos: Motorsport Images



The green shoots of a decorated career

that you never, ever see that are part of the machine and are as critical a part of the machine as anybody who is at the race circuit. His view is that they were as equal a part of the programme as anybody else. That is something I think is forgotten and lost when we are actually at the track, because clearly 'we' [the drivers] are the only thing that are important!

"But there is clearly an infrastructure and a group of people working equally as hard, and sometimes harder, than we are in terms of hours and giving up everything else. I learned a lot from Dr Ullrich in terms of how to manage those sort of processes."

Question: How important were the Leslie family, Davids Sr and Jr, to your career?
Glenn Moltisanti Alcock
SMRC
Via email

AM: "I don't think I could ever put into words how important they were. When I was about six years old, David Jr was starting to race in Formula Ford. I went to a couple of races and my dad helped them a bit as a mechanic. I was all-consumed by this racing driver from the hometown – I was from Dumfries – that was doing really well. That very much kick-started in me the idea of following motorsport, never mind the fact that Father David took me to get my first kart.

"Then he ran me in Formula Ford. After that I already had the Duckhams works drive lined up when the Marlboro Vauxhall Lotus opportunity came up. But without those two people, Davids Leslie Sr and Jr, I do not believe I would ever have gone on to car racing at all.

"It was a father-and-son team running everything out of a van with no support like teams have today. Looking back, and I'm very proud to say this, they produced Le Mans winners, Monaco Grand Prix winners and Indy 500 winners in me, David Coulthard and Dario Franchitti.

"I think that comes back very much to the core requirements for success, and not necessarily always the most polished. It was a very educational time. They pushed me forward, told me exactly how it was, there were no frills, there were bollockings on the way back in the van. Sometimes there was even the odd 'Aye, well done' when you won something pretty special!

"Probably the one thing that I learned – that I don't think anybody should ever try to repeat – is how to make a bacon roll in

continued on page 22

"There were no frills when I started"

Allan McNish

Now listen carefully: F3 boss Dick Bennetts advises McNish in F3, as does 1976 world beater James Hunt

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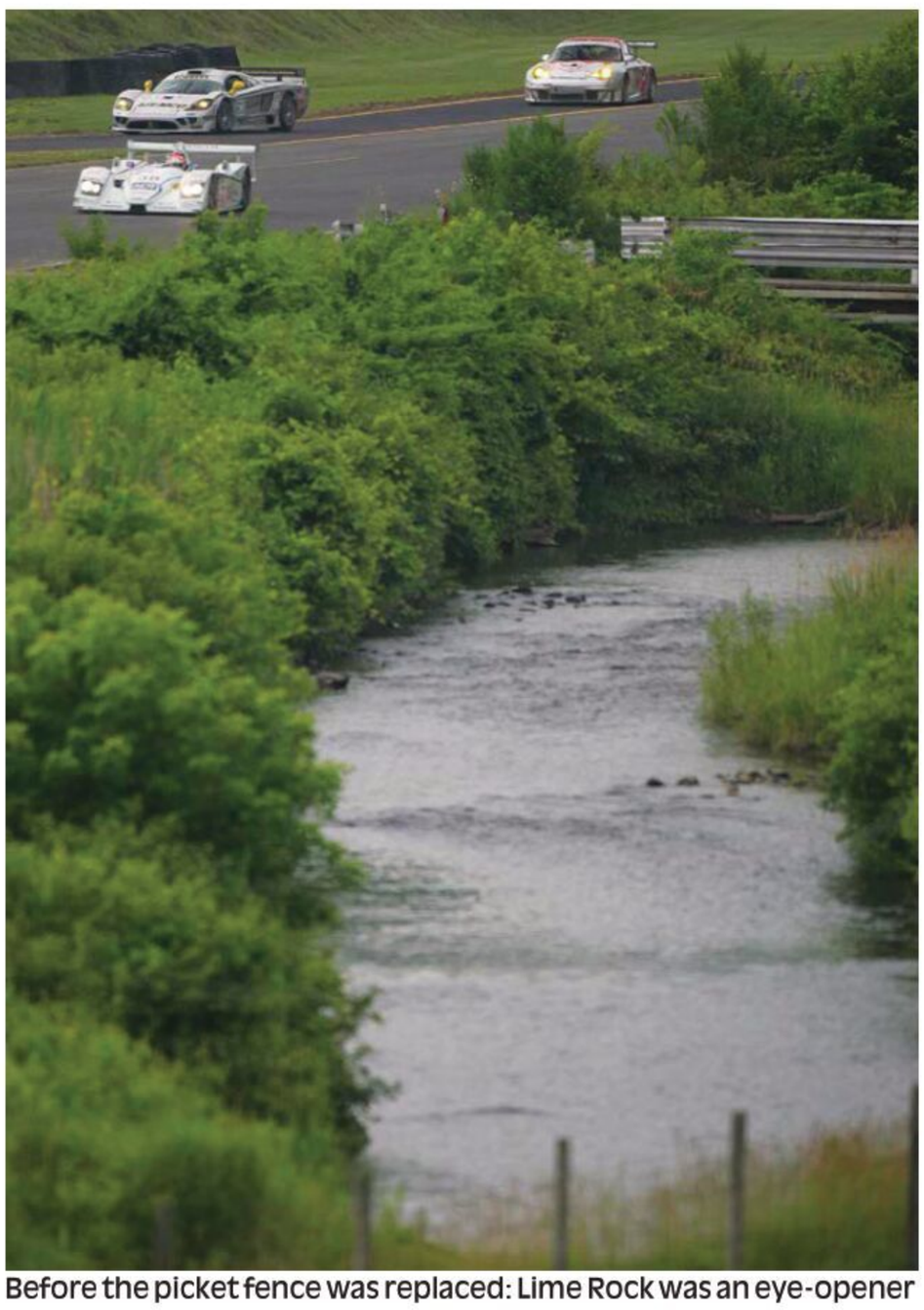
FEATURE

F3000 was about having the right chassis and engine



Before the picket fence was replaced: Lime Rock was an eye-opener

the back of a van on the way to Snetterton! I'm sure in today's world that is highly illegal… However, I became a dab hand at bacon rolls in the back of the van.

"But from base engineering, the basic understanding of the mechanics of it, and very much the driving side of things I learned from Young David, and it was quite an education."

Question: Allan, we all have knock backs that challenge us as people and drivers, what was your biggest and how did you reinvent yourself to not only keep going, but become a better driver and person?
David Brabham
Via email

AM: "I think Brabs knows… And he has had a big one as well.

"You lose more races than you win, and any driver who has had a career that's a long career, has had one major time when they've got to dig deep. That can be because of a bad season or two or other things. I'm firmly of the belief that is actually the make-or-break scenario that will see if you have a long and successful career or a short and a not-quite-as-successful as what one you maybe thought."

MN: There is another pause as Allan gathers his thoughts and memories of when he was 20 years old, racing from DAMS in F3000 at Donington Park. Coming from the back he tangled with another driver, hit the wall hard, which broke his car in half. He ended up sitting in basically just the tub on the access road to the tunnel that ran *under* the track, with a heavy concussion. Sadly, debris from the accident claimed the life of one of the spectators.

AM: "For me definitely Donington in 1990 was a critical point, no question, because that was clearly a life-changing moment in a lot of ways. I don't know how you could really explain it or understand it unless you go through that sort of experience.

"And to come back… not immediately… but to come back from that longer term, to put that 'to bed' if you like was pretty tough."

MN: It's not something he wants to dwell on, understandably, and switches to a more 'positive' one – though not at the time.

AM: "I think another one was in 1985 in the karting World championships. I was on the front row. Andrea Gilardi was on pole, I was second. Michael Schumacher was third, Laurent Aiello was fourth. Yvan Muller was in there, Stephane Ortelli and quite a few others.

"I didn't get the run into the first corner, and I think it was one of the very few times in my career in karting where I was beaten into the first corner, and I got shuffled down to third, and I finished third. I was only able to race [in the World championship] once just because of where my birthday landed, whereas rival drivers were doing it two or three times. That was my one opportunity that f**king slipped through my fingers.

"And that – and you can ask Dario Franchitti about this – probably took me longer to recover from in a bizarre way. The odd thing about that is when I won the World Endurance Championship in 2013… Well I knew that was going to be my last race, but I also knew it was a kind of up yours to 1985!

"On the slowing down lap there were a lot of things going through my head, like 'that's 1985 put to bed now'. I suppose people are different, but I took a lot of time to get over that just purely from a personal perspective as it was an opportunity missed.

"But definitely the most difficult thing was to recover from Donington."

Question: To the outside world you retired quite 'abruptly'. Had you planned it, or was it an instant decision?
John Charles
Via email

AM: "I never wanted to be the weak link in the chain. I'm quite clear that when I make a decision, then that's it.

"I came back from a race at Spa, which was a pre-race to Le Mans, and something happened during that whole weekend, and I just thought, 'I don't need all of this shit any longer'.

"I was losing the element of enjoyment that caused me to want to do it. One by one, it got to the point where it was going to tip the balance. So, I very much focused that that year was going to be absolutely successful, no questions. Le Mans, the championship, etc, but I didn't necessarily have it in my mind that I was retiring. I just knew that I wasn't enjoying it as much.

"I knew after the race at the Circuit of the Americas, which was stinking hot and a really hard fight, a qualifying race, all the way through with the Toyota. We won, which actually turned out to be our final victory. I was driving down to Houston for a PR tour, and it was actually

"I never wanted to be the weak link in the chain"
Allan McNish

McNish questions Capello about his fitness regime

on that drive when I decided: 'That's it'.

"I didn't say anything. We won the championship in China, we finished third and that was enough to win the championship and get that ticked off.

"I went to Paris the next day to make a film with all the FIA World champions. After that I came home and told Kelly, my wife, that that was it. I was finished. She sat there for a minute, then asked 'Are you sure?'… Errr yes I am. I then asked why she questioned it. She said 'Well I don't really want you staying home all the time!' And I was like, 'Well thanks very much!'

"I then went to Audi and spoke to Dr Ullrich and he didn't really say very much. Then he called me a couple of weeks later and asked if I was serious. I said yes, and that was it. My final race was effectively China, crossing the line to win the championship. I hadn't told anybody else until the press release had gone out.

"To me, once you've made a decision there's no point in procrastinating over it, you just get on with it and move on to the next thing.

"Also as I said at the beginning I don't ever want to be the weak link in the chain. I remember when I got my first opportunity at Porsche, and there's a time when you have to pass the baton or the helmet over, whatever you want to call it and that next generation is going to come through.

"Funnily enough it was Lucas di Grassi who took my seat at Audi then which today is quite ironic! [Di Grassi has been a winner in Formula E for the Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler team that Allan is team principal of.]

"You ask if I was planning it? I wasn't really, there were just pointers. To me, it was about the rawness of qualifying and a chequered flag which was winning. The rest of it I was enjoying less and less. And you have to put everything into the rest of it to get the other two."

Question: You got a Porsche Supercup VIP invite and opportunity for Silverstone in 1996 and it seemed to come out of nowhere. How career-changing was that?
Russell Scobbie
Via email

AM: "It changed it massively because I was trying to go to America at the time, 1995. I'd tested with PacWest in CART IndyCar. It was a shootout between myself JJ Lehto, Mark Blundell and a few others. I'd gone very well, I was the quickest in quali trim, race trim, whatever trim they wanted. I don't have any bad feelings about it but they gave the seat to Mark, which left me sitting twiddling my thumbs.

"Very bizarrely there was a gentleman running Porsche Supercup at the time who gave me a call and asked me if I'd like to do a race in the VIP car, which I couldn't do because it was so close to something else I was doing. But I said yes, I'll do one at some point. I remember Mika [Hakkinen] winning the one in Monaco in one of the first years, but that really was the only thing I knew about it.

"I did the race at Silverstone the following year, which was entertaining to say the least! I had never driven anything that was so tail-happy in my life. It was unbelievable, a real eye-opener. I was shocked! But I got on with it.

"Then at the end of that year they phoned me back up and asked if I was interested in going to drive the GT1 car because they were looking at revamping their driver line-up in their sportscar programme. I didn't know anything about it but I listened to them and decided to go along to the test at Paul Ricard, and it was myself and Alex Wurz that were driving. Alex ultimately went to Mercedes. But, I would say, yes, that was the reigniting of my career.

continued on page 24

Early recognition: Allan McNish and McLaren's big cheese Ron Dennis at the Autosport Awards in 1989

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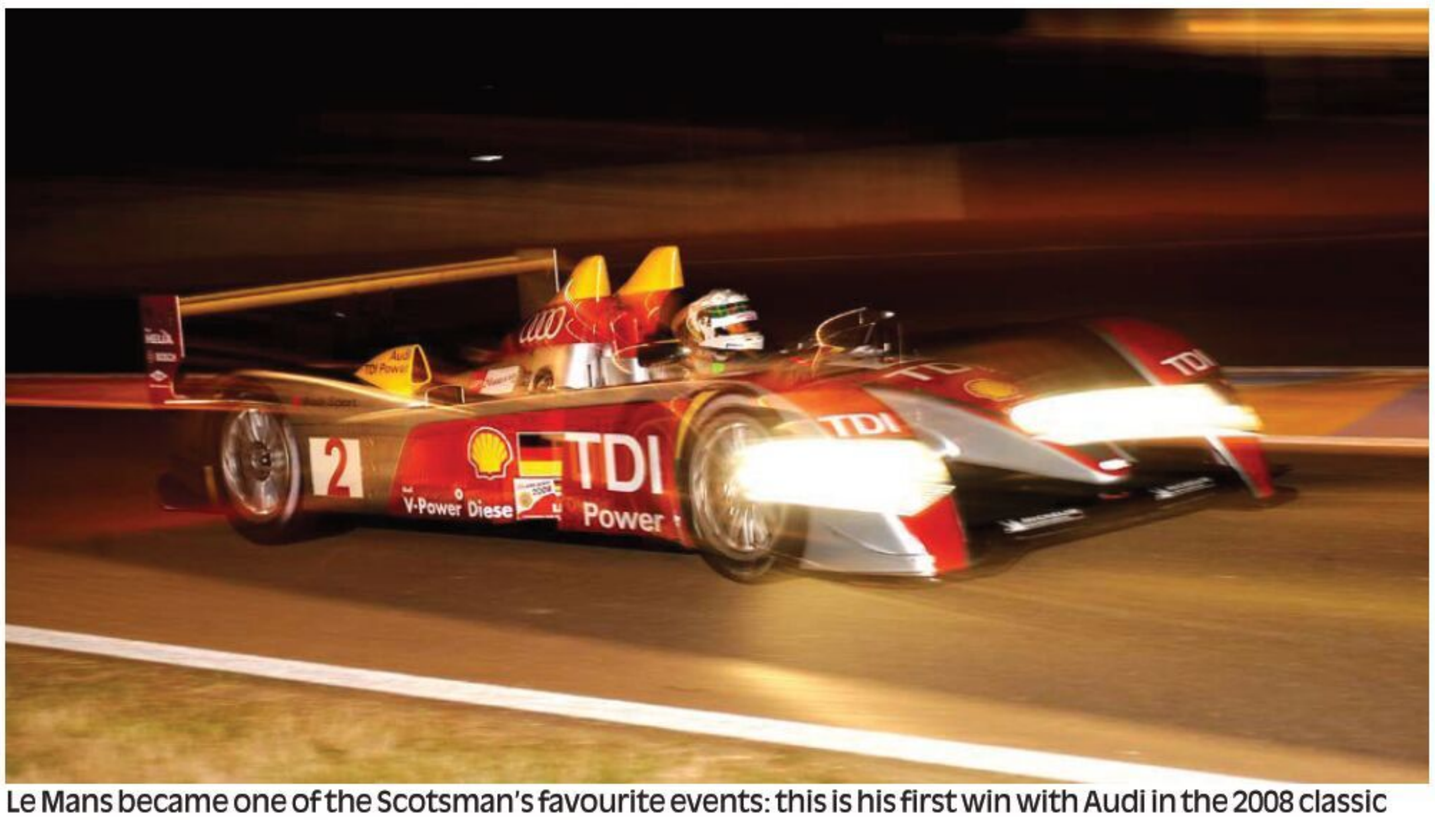
FEATURE

McNish says testing with McLaren gave him a unique insight into Ayrton Senna's prowess at the wheel

An overall victory with Porsche at Le Mans in 1998 was a huge turning point in the career of McNish



Le Mans became one of the Scotsman's favourite events: this is his first win with Audi in the 2008 classic

"Now the person that called me up that first time was a guy you might have heard of. Jost Capito. He was in charge of Supercup when that all kicked off."

Question: Do you miss the driving, and have you been tempted to have a go in the Formula E car?
Bill Walters
Via email
AM: "No. No, no and no. There were two points the following year, 2014. I was sitting with Dario Franchitti on the Saturday morning at Daytona. I already had my ambassador role with Audi and all things like that, and he'd had to retire after his crash a few months before.

"We were sitting there having breakfast, and we both said, 'Something doesn't feel right…' We didn't have the same nerves we didn't have the same focus. We were kind of there, in the paddock as you would be normally, but without all the energy that was thrown into the rest of it.

"The next one was at Le Mans. I always loved the first practice session at Le Mans, seeing the cars going out on to the circuit. From the first time I drove there in 1997, it just astounded me how all of this noise went out of the pitlane. Then it was silent for three minutes, and then it would all come back again. And in those three-and -a-bit minutes, they've done eight-and-a-half miles. It was just insane, and I always liked to see that.

"There was a point there in 2014, and it was a beautiful night. Audi had a safety car there, an R8 with everything on it. The latest thing. I took one of the board members of the ACO out as they'd asked me to do a lap in between the two sessions at 2100hrs…

"I went out on to the circuit with this thing and basically just caned it! I absolutely nailed it, kind of forgetting he was there. No traffic, nothing, zero. Just us. It was one of the first times at Le Mans apart from the first lap, when you go down the Mulsanne and don't see anything whatsoever. The light was perfect. Just everything was right. I floated through the Porsche Curves, floated through the track. I came into the pits and that was the itch scratched. I just needed that one lap, and that was it.

"However I think the other chap needed a bit more time and rebalancing after. He was expecting a calm drive around, but he got a qualifying lap!

"Le Mans still has a bit of the romance. People say it's not like it used to be, and it's never going to be, but it still has the romance."

Question: Would you do anything different with your career in hindsight?
Shaun Hollamby
Via email
AM: "Yes, without question, but at the time you were making the decisions with the circumstances and information you have got. I can look back at three or four things, but there's one in particular at a meeting in 1990 at the end of the season, where I had the option to go to Pacific Racing in F3000 for 1991, and I wanted to. However the other people in the room felt that it was better to stay where I was at DAMS for 1991. As it turned out the Lola chassis was a bit of a dog in 1991, and the Reynard which Pacific had went out and won the championship with Christian Fittipaldi.

"I'd had an instinct in my tummy that 'this isn't right' but I didn't feel I was in the situation to say 'no, I don't want to do that'.

"That's one example, but it taught me that I should follow my instincts, and I think that my instincts have generally guided me in the right direction, with the right team and team-mates around me. I also think you need to trip up first before you actually realise, before you decide what you should actually do.

"There are times you look back, but I don't think my path would have changed considerably at the end of the day."

Question: What was the longest debrief you ever had with Dick Bennetts in British Formula 3 in 1989? And how gutting was it for you to have the British F3 title taken from you so long after the season had finished?
Matt James
Motorsport News
AM: "The longest debrief was called '1989' – the entire season! Ask Mark Skewis… MN's Skewie was doing the F3 reports at the time and he would come and knock on the door and I'd still have a piece of paper, again pre-data, and it was a circuit map and it had little boxes for entry, mid corner and exit, and we'd have to go through every single bloody set-up. Test days were the worst. Snetterton, clearly we didn't have the budget to stay in a hotel overnight. I was living just outside London at the time, so I'd blast up at 0600hrs to get there for 0800hrs. You'd do your test day from 0900hrs until 1700hrs, then sit down for a bloody hour and a half debrief then two hours back down the road as well. And that was mind-numbingly painful.

"It was the same year as the Ayrton Senna testing thing. Again, it was a completely different era, and it's difficult for people to understand these days.

"It made you think very much as a driver, and that was a very positive thing to an extent where I think that sometimes in the junior categories – especially in karting – the drivers are taught to drive, but not necessarily taught to have that 360-degree rounded feeling. Systems go wrong, and then the driver's got to adapt. Back then when you didn't have systems, you had to adapt whatever.

"I think that was also a very educational time and Dick without a question was the master at it because he is Mr Detail, and he was 100% into looking for those what we call 'minute gains'.

"As for the championship it basically came down to the fact it was Brabs [David Brabham] and I all the way through. We won most of the races. At the end of the season it was all due to protests from the British Grand Prix, which very honestly I think was disappointing. Neither David nor I had any influence on how it was going to go. And it wasn't until March the following year when it went to the tribunal at the RAC.

"I was already racing in Formula 3000 and David was lining up for the Brabham F1 drive. From an extremely dominant season both of us had gone on to other things so it was a bit in the past. I won the last race at Thruxton and saw Brabs afterwards and I remember saying to him 'If I don't win, you deserve to win'. There was no question about it.

"It's not a case of one or the other. Both of us were head and shoulders above everybody.

"I look back on it now with a tinge of disappointment that a great racing season ended up being decided in a bloody court. That's the politics of this sport that we don't like."

"I just had to have that one last lap of Le Mans"

Allan McNish

To the winner, the spoils: McNish with inspiration Dr Ullrich, Kristensen and Duval celebrate in 2013

The Circuit of the Americas race for Audi in 2013 was a turning point for Allan McNish's driving career

Signing off with a title: McNish hit the title heights at the end of '13

Question: Who was your favourite sportscar team-mate and I do know that's like asking who your favourite child is…
Gillian Heythorpe
Via email
AM: "I've had some really good ones from different eras. Stephane Ortelli is still a good friend and lives around the corner. Laurent Aiello was actually my team-mate at DAMS in F3000 as well as at Porsche. Tom [Kristensen], we had a lot of time together but I suppose Dindo [Capello] is the one that I lean back to a little bit. You are right. It is like you're picking a favourite child in a way, but Dindo and I built up a bond.

"When I first met him, he hardly spoke English, and couldn't run the length of his body without coughing and spluttering! He was the most unfit person I've ever met in my life. He also needed a course in the Dick Bennetts Debrief School. But was one of the quickest and most adaptable drivers I ever came across.

"There was one year where I actually spent more days with Dindo racing and testing than I did with my wife Kelly.

"It was funny because with Tom, Dindo and I because Tom and I are quite similar with strong personalities and very clear views, and we both needed Dindo as the glue in between us! He was so naturally balanced at bringing people together. He's an absolute superstar.

"He is now one of the biggest Audi dealers in Italy. He's very unassuming and bloody sharp."

Question: You've driven on some bloody dangerous circuits in the USA – which was the one that scared you most, USA or otherwise?
Jonathan Astbury
Via email
AM: "Lime Rock! Lime Rock!

"It's got a part called 'No Name Straight', which is not straight. It had a barrier on the left-hand side which was about as strong as a picket fence to stop you going into the river. And on the right-hand side it was basically a harder banking that had trees growing out of it! This was 2005, and I'd heard about Lime Rock, the beautiful area. And, yes, it is a beautiful area, and a stunning setting. Everything is beautiful, but it terrified the living daylights out of me. It was bumpy, it was narrow. The safety standards were shocking. The final corner was a downhill right-hander where the wheel travel wasn't enough, so basically we were rubbing the wheel right up against the bodywork and it was nipping out the suspension, and you were on hard lock. If you got any movement, you were off. The barrier was about half a metre away from the corner…. A fifth-gear corner! Mind-numbingly terrifying.

"I had a bit of a Jackie Stewart flashback about safety standards and spoke to the head of IMSA and the circuit owner Skip Barber and discussed the safety of it. He then invested money to put in increased safety standards; there was a little chicane put in the back, more barriers were put up. The picket fence was replaced by a proper barrier to stop you going into the river…

"Yes. Lime Rock was definitely the one for me. However, saying that – and this is a bit controversial, and definitely shows the fact that I retired eight years ago – the circuits in America have an edge to them. There is no question about it. If you were to take Road America and put The Kink which is *juuuussst* flat out and hanging on… If you were to put that on a European circuit, the safety run-off would be in the next closest country.

"But those are the circuits where the driver can still make the difference. I know we can never sit back on safety and I was a big pusher of it as well.

"But if I take the circuits from around the world that make me think 'phwoar, yes. That was a good one', a lot of them are in the US because they still have that raw edge factor that has challenged cars and drivers for years."

Question: Who gave you the best advice in your career? I remember you once saying that if you were quick in a Formula 3 car you'd be quick in anything. And the second was EFDA's Dan Partel, imparting advice at the first Opel Lotus Euroseries race…
James Hilton
Via email
AM: "The F3 thing was David Leslie actually. And Dan Partel's was at the very first Opel Lotus race at Paul Ricard in 1988 where we were the Formula 1 support. We had a drivers' briefing. We were all sat there expecting it to be about flags and so on, and he just stood up and said, 'Remember boys, this is show business…. Don't f**k it up!'

"But the best bit of advice? I will have to think… My dad was always one with phrases, and he would come out with ones that used to infuriate me, I mean absolutely drive me insane. I'm not sure if he did it intentionally to see how I'd react. He had one which I remember from when I was a kid in karting. I was really young. I was pretty inexperienced and I was very, very small, kind of getting bullied and pushed around a lot. He said, 'Look. There's no-one better than you. They are only more experienced.'

"When you sit down and look at it, people are more experienced. You have to build up and be there. That was definitely one of them.

"And the other one was: 'They count the winners at the finish, son'. That one came from when we had a pool table at home, in a small room. There was one cue that was short, and the other was a full-sized snooker cue, and he would always take the short one. I was 13 or 14 years old and I was absolutely annihilating him. Then he got on a run. The more whisky he had, the better he got. He got on a run, and he beat me, and he just said 'Count the winners at the finish'. I was absolutely devastated at the time! But they are the two bits that have stuck with me through my life." ■

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FEATURE

Photos: Eddie Kelly

Evans won under a cloud on Argyll Rally

HOW CHICANERY LEFT A STING IN THE TAIL OF THE ARGYLL RALLY

The Scottish opener was marred by one-minute time penalties for competitors clipping chicanes. Luke Barry examines

Unfortunately, people currently live in a society where – more often than not – everyone concentrates on the negatives rather than the positives. While the recent Scottish Rally Championship opener, the Argyll Rally, was a triumph in that it kickstarted multi-venue rallying in Scotland and closed-road rallying in the UK after the Covid hiatus, all the talk about on the way home was penalties. And chicanes.

Chicanes caused a bit of a rumble on the British Rally Championship opener at Oulton Park in May too, but that's perhaps expected on a circuit rally. Some were being clipped and moved, allowing those further back in the field to gain more speed and time. In Argyll, it was the formation and the severity of hitting one of them that irked so many.

Chicanes exist on most multi-venue rallies to bring down the average speed of the stage. For a closed-road event in the UK, the stage bogey time will be set based on a 75mph average speed for insurance purposes. Organisers add in chicanes to slow the pace. They comprise of hay bales, plastic barriers, tyres or even cones. Mull Car Club opted for plastic barriers in Argyll.

Clerk of the course Chris Woodcock explains to MN: "We could have had bales but those lanes were narrow enough as they were, and when you have bales you can't make them any smaller. I thought some of those chicanes would just be too tight. Plus, if anyone gets it wrong with a chicane that's made of bales, they can easily block the chicane. So I took the view that if we made them as though they were easy to put back, paint on the road where they go and if anybody hits them, they get a minute penalty."

It's that last part that's rankled so many. Any kind of contact with the plastic barriers resulted in 60 seconds being added to the competitor's time – and several were affected. Freddie Milne grazed one with his Ford Fiesta R5 on SS7 and deducted 60s. He lost the rally by 43s to Meirion Evans.

Motorsport UK suggests that hitting a chicane should result in a stage maximum as it's the incorrect route. Woodcock however felt "that was too stiff a penalty" but he "wanted it to be stiff enough that it would discourage people" from clipping chicanes to gain an advantage. This was made clear in the final instructions with its own sub-section, with the words 'You have been warned' in bold text.

Woodcock adds: "I did have some very good judges of fact on the chicanes who I knew would be absolutely impartial and say it as it was.

"I had some judge of fact reports that said they'd hit the chicanes, people gave me video evidence to say they hadn't hit them but you can see they'd hit them because the wing mirror came up into the side window. If you've got a rule that says if you hit a chicane you get a penalty, you can't just say well he clipped it.

All the field was warned of woe...

"You either hit it or you didn't."

Milne and co-driver Patrick Walsh appealed their sanction, which threw the final result of the rally into doubt for a couple of hours. The appeal was not upheld, therefore the pair finished third overall on the rally.

Milne tells MN: "I honestly don't think we hit anything because I was so careful about it. A lot of people were outraged by it [the penalty], we did protest it, but the weird thing is the stewards were all apologising to Patrick and he was saying 'well don't apologise, just make it right'.

"I've got videos people have been sending me where some smashed chicanes so hard the thing literally went flying and they didn't get a penalty. It's all a bit unfair. If we'd gone through it at fourth gear I'd take it on the chin, but when we're down to first, rolling round it, there's no gain. It is possible we skimmed it, it is possible, but we definitely didn't hit anything."

Milne lost out on what he thought was a win with a late penalty

Evans benefited from Milne's penalty to win his first senior rally, but he confesses it isn't the way he wanted to seal it. David Wright, Jock Armstrong, John MacCrone and Meirion's father Melvyn – who pulled out after Friday since discovering he'd been docked one minute – were all penalised too, making Evans' Volkswagen Polo GTI R5 one of few leading cars not to receive any penalties.

"We were all aware what the penalty of hitting a chicane would be before going," Evans tells MN. "I agree it's a very harsh penalty, it's hard to say the right thing. I feel sorry for Fred, he drove well. They issued a bulletin last week, I read it and it did sound like they were going to be very harsh about it. We were ultra, ultra-safe through every chicane all weekend because I didn't want to get a penalty."

An argument that has cropped up since the event was why weren't hay bales used instead of plastic barriers? Some hay bales were present in Argyll to protect protruding infrastructure on the rally route, but Evans reckons it's "a bit of a Catch-22" situation.

"[If] somebody rams a bale head on and does 10 grand's worth of damage, they'll say why can't we use plastic barriers? But then you graze a plastic barrier and it falls over, it's why don't we have bales?

"It's down to human discretion a lot, you and I might look at it differently," he adds. "It's down to the person who saw it and if a judge of fact tells the clerk of the course something, it's probably difficult for him to argue. For me, a minute for hitting a chicane is harsh regardless but that's what it was so that's the way we had to play it." ■

MOTORSPORT NEWS says...

Drivers have had to toe the line

Does the one-minute time penalty punishment fit the drivers' crime?

Calling a verdict is quite tricky because Chris Woodcock is right to point out the rules – and punishments – were there in black and white, Freddie Milne's frustration can be understood by all.

Rally organisers regularly have a thankless task as competitors are quick to turn on them in certain situations. Several felt that Milne had been robbed of victory in the aftermath of the rally. But fair play to the stewards for sticking to their guns, even though they knew it would be an unpopular decision.

It is hard not to feel for Milne. We've watched the onboard co-driver Walsh uploaded onto social media, and didn't see or hear anything that would suggest he clipped a chicane. But from inside the car you can't see the side or rear of the vehicle. With no outside angle available to analyse, we have to trust that the judge of fact saw what they saw and made the correct decision.

However, the punishment doesn't really fit the crime. A one-minute penalty for hitting a chicane is excessive. Woodcock is spot on that you can't begin to allow grey areas in a judiciary process – so the fact Milne kissed the chicane rather than outright hit it is irrelevant – but a 60-second deduction for such an offence is rally ruining. A 10 or 15s deduction would have been more appropriate. The time gained from cutting the route would not equate to anywhere near a minute. Of course, the organisers wanted to design it so that competitors wouldn't try anything untoward, but even if they went flat out through and just smacked the barriers clear they'd probably gain an absolute maximum of around 10s.

As with all rallies, the organisers will debrief and learn whatever they can for next year. But let's not let the immense amount of work they put in to pull the event off get lost in the rigamarole.

Luke Barry

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KELLY CLAIMS THE MN CIRCUIT RALLY TITLE FROM THE FRONT FOOT

Ford Fiesta man signs off with victories in North Wales. By Jack Benyon

Kelly brought it home with two rally wins

Mark Kelly has proven time and again he is a force to be reckoned with in UK rallying, and victory on the Lee Holland Stages and a Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship title to boot proves that pedigree.

With a flawless drive at Anglesey, Kelly and co-driver Neil Colman wrapped up the drivers' and co-drivers' titles respectively with a round to spare.

It may have been a shortened year where five events took place down from the usual seven but grassroots motorsport has been hit hard by the pandemic and once again the organising team behind the MSN Rally Championship delivered in earnest with a calendar of events, not to mentioned a high-profile shared round with the British Rally Championship.

Jonathan Palmer and David Willey at championship promoter MSVR have been key to getting the championship underway to start with amid the pandemic, while Anglesey circuit's commercial manager Annette Freeman has been vital in organising the double-points finale at the venue.

Coming into the event, Kelly held a 23-point lead but it was far from unassailable as fellow Ford Fiesta R5 converts Rob Hughes and Joe Cunningham lay within striking distance, as did Escort driver Josh Payton and Kevin Procter, who usually competes in one-off events as opposed to the championship.

It was Procter who appeared to be Kelly's biggest threat in the Anglesey by Pendle & District and Garstang & Preston Motor Clubs-run event which has come to be many drivers' favourite on the calendar with its twisty, slippery infield section and infamous jump contrasting the fast and flowing circuit nicely.

This layout on Saturday in particular was more tight and technical than usual.

Right from the go it was clear Procter had an issue as he dropped 17 seconds on the first stage, although Kelly and Rob Hughes, 5s behind the champion elect on the first test, had set off at a frantic speed.

It turned out Procter had a throttle issue and with a lack of the correct spare part needed, he plummeted down the order in a twist of good fate for Hughes, Cunningham and outsider Payton.

Payton was always going to be at a disadvantage in this event with his older Escort that houses a two-litre engine, not like the 2.5-litre motors now traditionally installed, and he'd be playing catch up with half a minute lost to Kelly on the first stage alone.

Procter's throttle issues meant a 68th-place second-stage time, taking him out of the equation, although he didn't fall out of the top-four stage times on any test apart from the troublesome second, showing his outright pace was much better than his 15th-place finish.

Kelly had been so fast on the opener that Hughes was his only real challenger for the day.

Hughes and co-driver Sion Cunniff should be credited for how far they have come following a switch from a Millington-powered Focus to the R5, and all day long at Anglesey they weren't beaten by more than five seconds.

But the time accumulated meant Kelly was untouchable. After eight stages, Kelly had won seven and tied Hughes for fastest time on the other in a triumphant display.

It was quickly obvious that Cunningham was out of the championship fight after a combination of Kelly and Hughes's first-stage pace and how far back points-wise he was, so he settled in for a podium fight for the day.

Champion Chris West's switch from his Peugeot 306 Maxi has been troublesome aboard a new Porsche 997 R-GT-level car, but his driving has been as good as ever as he has adapted rapidly to the rear-engined machine that might be fast in a straight line but is a bit big for many of the intricacies of circuit rallying.

Neil Roskell has previously appeared in the championship in a Subaru Impreza but recently switched to a Fiesta R5, and delivered a strong performance to round out the top five at Anglesey.

He was also the last driver within two minutes of Kelly.

Graham Coffey made a rare championship outing outside of the Neil Howard Stages that he sponsors and competes in every year, and was rewarded with a sixth-place finish in his turbocharged S2000 Fiesta.

He had been 10th with three stages to go but gradually got more and more comfortable with the North Wales event and headed Jack Thorne and Andrew Richard's Hyundai i20 by seven seconds. Thorne continues to impress having shown how naturally gifted he is in British Rallycross.

Dave Willet was another Escort outlier in a top 10 full of more modern machinery *(see sidebar)*, while a man known for unusual machinery took ninth.

Alistair Inglis has rallied a Lotus Exige for five years but switched to a Fiesta R5 in 2020, but Anglesey marks his first top 30 finish as his adaptation continues alongside Colin Inglis. They were two seconds behind Willet.

RESULTS

Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship round 4/5
Event: Lee Holland Stages Where: Anglesey When: July 3

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Mark Kelly/Neil Colman	Ford Fiesta R5	52m54s
2	Rob Hughes/Sion Cunniff	Ford Fiesta R5	+19s
3	Joe Cunningham/Josh Beer	Ford Fiesta R5	+1m02s
4	Chris West/Keith Hounslow	Porsche 997 GT3	+1m06s
5	Neil Roskell/Daniel Roskell	Ford Fiesta R5	+1m50s
6	Graham Coffey/Georgina Smith	Ford Fiesta S2000T	+2m10s
7	Jack Thorne/Andrew Richards	Hyundai i20 R5	+2m17s
8	Dave Willett/John Davies	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m23s
9	Alistair Inglis/Colin Inglis	Ford Fiesta R5	+2m25s
10	Josh Payton/Jamie Vaughan	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m47s

Class winners: Christopher Newton/Anthony Newton (Vauxhall Nova); Ben Wilkinson/David Batley (Peugeot 106 Maxi); Payton/Vaughan; Willett/Davies; Adrian Spencer/Mark Hewitt (Subaru Impreza); Cunningham/Beer; Paul Gorge/Daniel Hurst (Mazda MX-5); West/Hounslow; James Tointon/Chloe Louise Thomas (Austin Mini). **Championship (after 4/5 rounds):** 1 Kelly 232; 2 Payton 190; 3 Hughes 178; 4 Kevin Procter 176; =5 Martin Hodgson 143 =5 Nick Whale 143

NOVA DUO DOMINATE AND MAINTAIN A 100% RECORD

Christopher Newton and brother Anthony were almost seven minutes clear of the opposition and won the event class and MNClass A honours respectively in their Vauxhall Nova. It maintained their 100% win record.

Ben Wilkinson/David Batley managed a similar feat in Class B claiming MN and event honours in their Peugeot 106 Maxi over a pair of much newer Ford Fiesta R2s, driven by Ashleigh Morris and Alex Cannon.

Repeatedly one of the stars of the series in 2020-21, Josh Payton continued his giant-killing heroics in a two-litre Escort by sealing Class C honours and maintaining his unbeaten record this season.

In Class D, Dave Willett/John Davies were the event winners but are not registered in the MN series, so the honour on this occasion went to series regulars Martin Hodgson/Tony Jones in their similar Ford Escort Mk2. Peter Jackson/Craig Simkiss (Ford Escort Mk2) and the Porsche Cayman of Ciro Carannante/Lauren Hewitt rounded out the top three in a 15-car class entry, six of which finished in the top 20.

Adrian Spencer steered his Subaru Impreza to his first E1 class victory of the season, while Kelly's victorious run led to E2 honours.

Chris West/Keith Hounslow were the sole runners in the GT category and James Tointon/Chloe Louise Thomas fulfilled a similar role in the Historic class in their Mini. The latter were bundled into the Class B group and finished fourth in that.

Paul Sheard had to retire from the event after six stages, handing the MX-5 honours to the ever-improving Paul Gorge/Daniel Hurst.

Wilkinson put some newer cars in their place in Class B battle

Photos: SMJ Photography

Cunningham was again the star of the show

SEASON FINISHED IN STYLE FOR THE NEW CHAMPION

As if Mark Kelly hadn't proven enough the previous day, he added another four stage wins out of eight to his name at the second event at Anglesey on Sunday, never ceding the lead of the event.

It means Kelly, who has been working with double British Rally champion Matt Edwards in adapting to four-wheel-drive machinery, took a third MN Circuit Rally Championship win in a row.

The drivers were met with a much faster and flowing layout for the second day of action, which in places should have played into the hands of the 2.5-litre Ford Escorts and Darrians on the entry list.

Also in stark contrast to Saturday, Kelly was kept honest all day and the resurgent Joe Cunningham and Rob Hughes refused to take the championship defeat lying down.

Cunningham was getting another chance at top-line machinery thanks to his uncle Kevin Procter, but a sixth-place opening stage time wasn't reflective of what this young driver is capable of. However, he's been competing on old tyres and knows he needs to bring the car home in one piece to get more chances in the machine in the future.

He fought up to fourth on the next stage and then chipped away at Kelly's advantage, but the 10 seconds lost on the first test would prove vital as he missed out on a first overall win by four seconds.

Cunningham took a stage win on the fifth, sixth and eighth tests stealing 12s back from Kelly. It was an honourable performance given how long Cunningham has spent in under-powered and uncompetitive machinery in the past.

Rob Hughes/Sion Cunniff also continue their adaptation to an R5 machine and also helped to keep Kelly much more honest than on Saturday, eight seconds adrift of Kelly by the end in a more than reasonable performance which sealed third in the championship. The next finisher was another 23s behind.

That would be Barry Morris, who was running fourth on the Saturday rally and within 10s of a podium when first the exhaust fell off on stage six, then a suspension mounting arm bracket gave way forcing a retirement from what would have been a podium challenge on the last stage.

He returned triumphant to keep up the strong record of Darrian T90s at the venue, easily taking Class 5 (MN Class D) honours in the process.

Morris had gone toe-to-toe with another returning giant in Procter, and the latter took five seconds out of Morris and co-driver Tom Hutchings on the final stage. Still, it wasn't enough and Procter lost out by a solitary second, despite jumping two positions on that last test. He did secure second in the championship for his trouble.

For a man used to winning the MN Circuit Championship, sixth won't feel like a victory, but given Chris West's overnight dramas it was a Godsend. West had a steering rack go on the Porsche 997 and car owner Nigel Mummery had to have one couriered to the venue for West to start the next day's rallying on Sunday.

Fourth through to seventh were split by seven seconds at the end of the event, and Andy Scott/Marc Fowler finished seventh, three seconds adrift of West.

With a number of drivers overcoming Saturday adversity, Neil Roskell/Daniel Roskell had to settle for eighth in their Fiesta R5, but did well to hold off the charging Escort Mk2 of David Henderson/Chris Williams. That duo had a starter motor go even before the first stage on Saturday and then had a halfshaft snap on stage four taking them out of contention.

Back with vengeance on day two, Henderson took second in class behind Morris, even if a class win on the day wouldn't have won him the MN Class D title. He also leaped ahead of Mark Smith/Tim Nunn's Darrian when they set the 35th fastest time on the penultimate stage.

Graham Coffey/Georgina Smith were the highest finishing mixed crew on both days and rounded out the top 10 in Sunday's action, also jumping Smith and Nunn.

Dropping five seconds on the last stage really cost Coffey, who lost out to Henderson by one second and lost five on the last stage.

With the top 10 split by just 1m26s, it was a fitting way to end the year. With all that has been happening in the world over the last 16 months, grassroots sport has been hit the hardest and to see 78 and 82 entries respectively on a single-venue rally in Anglesey is quite the achievement.

With the lessons learned from a joint round with the BRC at Oulton Park, it's clear that the series is held in high regard and that next season should be a huge step up as rallying attempts to return to the 'new normal'.

In the meantime, it has a fitting champion in Mark Kelly, a stout supporter of the championship and his fellow competitors.

RESULTS

Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship round 5/5

Event: SMC Stages Where: Anglesey When: July 4

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Mark Kelly/Neil Colman	Ford Fiesta R5	45m07s
2	Joe Cunningham/Josh Beer	Ford Fiesta R5	+4s
3	Robert Hughes/Sion Cunniff	Ford Fiesta R5	+8s
4	Barry Morris/Tom Hutchings	Darrian T90 GTR+	+31s
5	Kevin Procter/Patrick Walsh	Ford Fiesta S2000T	+32s
6	Chris West/Keith Hounslow	Porsche 997 GT3	+35s
7	Andy Scott/Marc Fowler	Ford Fiesta R5	+38s
8	Neil Roskell/Daniel Jack Roskell	Ford Fiesta R5	+56s
9	David Henderson/Chris Williams	Ford Escort Mk2	+1m22s
10	Graham Coffey/Georgina Smith	Ford Fiesta S2000T	+1m26s

Class winners: Glyn Thomas/Owain Thomas (Peugeot 106 Rallye); Chris Ruck/Steve Harris (Opel Corsa); Josh Payton/Jamie Vaughan (Ford Escort Mk2); Morris/Hutchings; Procter/Walsh; Paul Gorge/Daniel Hurst (Mazda MX-5); James Tointon/Chloe Louise Thomas (Austin Mini). **Final championship standings:** 1 Kelly 236; 2 Procter 198; 3 Hughes 196; 4 Payton 191; 5 Martin Hodgson 179

Morris bounced back from Saturday woe with a fourth placed finish

THOMAS IN IS POLE TO PROFIT FROM NEWTON'S WOE

Christopher and Anthony Newton had a nightmarish end to an otherwise perfect campaign with a gearbox issue on their Vauxhall Nova, but the pair still won the Class A championship in the MN Circuit Rally Championship anyway. Glyn Thomas/ Owain Thomas (Peugeot 106 Rallye) emerged victorious on the day.

Class B victors on the Saturday, Ben Wilkinson/David Batley, were non-starters and Chris Ruck/ Steve Harris (Opel Corsa) won the event and Championship (it was labelled Class 3 on the event).

Josh Payton/Jamie Vaughan made it a clean sweep of championship event wins to seal the title in Class C, netting 17th overall in their Escort Mk2.

Barry Morris took Class D, but Saturday's class win and a third on Sunday secured long-time championship supporter Martin Hodgson the title. David Henderson split the pair on the day.

Greg Williams made up for narrowly missing out on the Saturday victory to top Class E1, which also secured him the MN championship in that class.

Kelly topped E1 on the event and in the championship at the end of the year ahead of Rob Hughes, Kevin Procter and Joe Cunningham.

James Tointon/Chloe Louise Thomas made it two wins in a row and as no other entrant of the eight in the class have done more than two events, it was enough for Tointon and Thomas to seal the Historic championship in the MN series. Chris West managed a similar feat as the only entrant in the GT class.

In the MX-5 one-make championship consistency was key for Paul Gorge to come out on top ahead of perennial rival Steve Dolman who had two poor scores. On the perfect day, Gorge and Daniel Hurst wrapped up the class win on Sunday too, to go into the off-season in style.

Josh Payton completed a clean sweep of MN event victories

Paul Sheard was one of those who fell foul of the tough challenges

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

M-SPORT STAGES BY JOHN FIFE — JULY 3-4

MOFFETT GETS HIS MOJO BACK WITH BATTLING PERFORMANCE IN CUMBRIA

Josh tops the all-Ford battle ahead of Rhys Yates in the M-Sport spectacular in the Greystoke Forest

Photos: Chicane Media

Moffett was delighted with his gravel pace

Josh Moffett and Andy Hayes scored a narrow 13-second victory over Rhys Yates and Max Freeman on last weekend's M-Sport Stages Rally in Cumbria.

Like the M-Sport Return to Rally event staged at the same venue last August, this was an invitation event for Ford owners.

Indeed, many of the entries came from crews who wished to test themselves as much as their cars after 15 months of Covid restrictions and rallying inactivity ahead of next weekend's second round of the British Rally Championship and the opening round of the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series, the Nicky Grist Stages.

Completing the podium line-up was British Rally champion Keith Cronin with Mikie Galvin marking a return to rallying after their last outing some three years ago on the Ypres Rally in Belgium.

Driving the latest Mk2 version of the Fiesta R5, Yates was immediately on the pace fastest over the first three of Saturday's six special stages with Moffett's Fiesta WRC clawing a little back over the final two. Unfortunately SS4 had to be cancelled. A road accident earlier in the day had led to delays with rally traffic and the organisers had to get the action completed before the local 1730hrs curfew.

Even so, Yates had a lead of just seven seconds as the cars returned to Dovenby's overnight halt for Parc Ferme. Yates explained: "The first runs were very loose and gravelly so I was very cautious as I've been doing mostly Tarmac recently."

Moffett was cautious at the start too, but for a different reason: "I did this event last year and didn't do so well. I had trouble on the first stage when a spark plug stripped its thread and blew out of the cylinder head."

Even more cautious was Cronin in an R5. He said: "I've done nothing for three years. The car is new and I'm using Hankooks for the first time, so the tyres are new. I'm the rustiest part of the team!"

As Cronin picked up speed, Matthew Wilson and Stuart Loudon in the brand-new Rally3 Fiesta were pushed out of third place to fourth at the overnight halt.

"We're losing out to the more powerful cars on the straights and under acceleration," said Wilson. "But if I think there is a chance of catching them tomorrow, it'll be out with the spare wheel and any other excess weight."

At this announcement Stuart Loudon looked a tad apprehensive…

Elliot Payne and Rhys Stoneman, having their first time on gravel with Elliot Payne and Rhys Stoneman the Ford Fiesta R5, were fifth overnight just ahead of the World Rally Car of Stephen Petch and Michael Wilkinson. Tom Williams and Jamie Edwards lost all hopes of a decent finish when a clip came off a turbo pipe and they completed SS2 with no boost.

As for Payne Sr, Charlie had rolled his Fiestas WRC on the opening stage and was out of the rally. Garry Jennings also rolled his R5 on the third test, but it was a soft roll and he was able to continue. Hugh Hunter coasted to a halt at the end of the first stage with no oil pressure in the Focus WRC and Simon Bowen lasted a few more stages before the water pump failed in his S2000T.

Intermittent rain showers on Saturday gave way to a sunny start on Sunday – before more rain came. Then the sun came out when everyone was packing up to go home.

Moffett was 17s quicker than Yates on the first stage on Sunday morning. "My fault," admitted Yates. "I spun. I just pulled the handbrake a bit too early and it spun, then stalled."

The final three stages all featured longer straights interspersed with chicanes leaving Yates chasing hard but Moffett now in control. Cronin had been getting progressively quicker with each passing stage and finished a solid third ahead of Payne and Petch with Wilson pushed down to sixth but still mighty impressed with the new car.

Joseph McGonigle finished seventh but might have done better had it not been for striking a chicane bale when the Fiesta stalled under braking, and Seb Perez was eighth on just his second gravel rally and first time out in the R5. Gareth Sayers and Connor McCloskey rounded off the top 10.

Given the wet and slippery conditions and the extent of the sophisticated machinery around him, Frank and Lauren Kelly managed to score a mighty impressive top-20 finish with 19th overall and top two-wheel-drive

RESULTS

M-Sport Stages Rally
When: July 3-4, 2021 Where: Greystoke Forest, Cumbria

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Josh Moffett/Andy Hayes	Ford Fiesta WRC	49m40s
2	Rhys Yates/Max Freeman	Ford Fiesta R5 Mk2	+13s
3	Keith Cronin/Mikie Galvin	Ford Fiesta 1600	+1m16s
4	Elliot Payne/Rhys Stoneman	Ford Fiesta 1600	+1m29s
5	Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson	Ford Fiesta WRC	+1m45s
6	Matthew Wilson/Stuart Loudon	Ford Fiesta Rally 3	+1m56s
7	Joseph McGonigle/Ciaran Geaney	Ford Fiesta Rally 2	+2m05s
8	Seb Perez/Gary McElhinney	Ford Fiesta R5	+2m22s
9	Gareth Sayers /Gareth Gilchrist	Ford Fiesta R5	+2m27s
10	Connor McCloskey/Noel O'Sullivan	Ford Fiesta R5	+2m41s

Class winners: 1: Moffett/Hayes; 2: Yates/Freeman; 3: Frank Kelly/Lauren Kelly (Ford Escort Mk2); 4; Adrian Hetherington/Ronan O'Neill (Ford Escort RS1800); 5: Brendan Cumiskey/Lorcan Moore (Ford Fiesta R4)

A spin cost Rhys Yates the chance of a victory

Matt Wilson was ready for a battle in Rally3 car

One of the performances of the event came from the Ford Escort Mk2 of the Kellys

Frank Kelly almost in a class of his own to lift the win in his Ford Escort Mk2

Josh Moffett and Rhys Yates cleaned up in the two main divisions, Classes 1 and 2, while Frank Kelly was almost in a class of his own in Class 3, the only other runners being Rob Wright and Mark Fisher in their Mk2.

Wright finished more than three minutes behind Kelly after striking a banking and bending the steering while Kelly was trying out new tyres from Cooper Tires.

"This is my first time on gravel since 2016," said Kelly. "Cooper Tires wanted me to try their new gravel tyre. It's good for traction and under braking but I haven't found the limits on cornering – yet!"

The Ford Escort Mk2 of Adrian Hetherington and Ronan O'Neill shared the lead in Class 4 with the G3 of Shane McGirr and Darren Curran.

They tied on identical times with Hetherington getting the place courtesy of a faster time on SS1. Only four seconds behind this duo was the Escort Mk2 of Ben Friend and Cliff Simmons.

Class 5 comprised all the Up to 1600cc front-wheel-drive cars. Brendan Cumiskey and Lorcan Moore took the honours by just nine seconds from Eamonn Kelly and Conor Mohan both in R4s. Fraser Anderson and Jack Bowen impressed with third in class in their R2T.

RACING REPORTS

Photos: Ben Lawrence

BRITISH HILLCLIMB: BARBON MANOR AND HAREWOOD BY PAUL LAWRENCE — JULY 3-4

Summers dug deep to improve his Barbon time on second run

Gould was spectacular on his way to third fastest time on Saturday

Menzies has now only got a narrow points lead

THE MENZIES AND SUMMERS SHOW ROCKS HILLCLIMBERS

In a weekend covering two days, two hills, three run-offs, torrential rain and an abandoned meeting, Wallace Menzies added just one point to his lead over Alex Summers in the 2021 British Hillclimb Championship.

On the short and sometimes bumpy Barbon Manor hill on the western edge of the Pennines, they ended Saturday with a win and a second each after a tremendous battle. The following day, at a rain-hit Harewood, Menzies won the single run-off with a brilliant performance before the event was abandoned. In the save of the weekend, Summers just scraped into the run-off and then bagged second to his arch rival. Friday's four-point lead for Menzies had been eked out to five by Sunday evening.

Heavy rain in the morning at Barbon Manor left the big power cars struggling for grip. Thankfully, the track was dry for the afternoon, and the competition was intense. Menzies set the mark in the first run-off to take top points with an attacking 20.72 seconds, two-thirds of a second shy of the record, but Summers was close with a 20.86s climb and was determined to find more time.

Behind them, regular contenders Trevor Willis, Sean Gould and Scott Moran were all suitably quick to lead the chase, but ultimately this was coming down to another day in the Menzies and Summers battle.

As drivers got back into the groove on a tricky hill they'd not seen for two years, the second run-off was even closer. Summers really attacked the hill and pared an impressive six-tenths of a second from his first run-off time. He claimed victory with a mighty 20.26s ascent, which was just 0.18s adrift of Jos Goodyear's six-year-old hill record. Menzies chased hard and trimmed his time to 20.49s, but it was Summers who claimed the second set of maximum points as they ended the day level in a hillclimbing score draw.

It was another instalment in the fierce but sporting contest between two drivers at the top of their game.

"It's just nip and tuck," said Menzies. "I'm pretty grateful that Alex didn't manage to get another couple of tenths because that would have been another point for the hill record, but he came very close!"

"Wallace is driving so well," said Summers. "It's just a great thing to be a part of and we're pushing each other and that's how it should be: two completely different cars, two different drivers."

Showering sparks from the skid plates of his GR59, Sean Gould found a big chunk of time to get close to Menzies in third with a 20.66s climb, with Willis, Dave Uren and Moran packing out the top six.

The dry afternoon cost the smaller-engined cars a chance of causing a major upset on a hill where power tells, if it can be used. However, the hard-charging pair of Eynon Price and David Warburton each bagged a top seven finish in their 1600cc battle, though Price didn't make the second run-off after spinning at the Hairpin in the second class runs. Warburton was pleased to be back in the points after taking a corner off his Gould at Doune. Meanwhile, Olivia Cooper was widely applauded for a gutsy performance that got her 1340cc Force into the run-off points.

The following day it all happened again across the Pennines at Harewood with what should have been another double-header. Sadly, ever-increasing rain made the first run-off something of a lottery and the meeting was abandoned before the second run-off.

Through it all, Menzies was completely in charge and won by a whopping 2.5s as Summers rescued an important second in the single run-off after only just making the cut in the class runs. Menzies needed all his car control to take a fine win and Summers will be relieved to have salvaged second place and drop only one point to his title rival. Seldom in the BHC has a 2.5s margin only earned the top driver one extra championship point over his chief rival.

Gould missed the cut but Richard Spedding finally got into action after being dogged by engine dramas all season and grabbed third from Moran as Price and the flying Andy Greenen stormed into the top six in the rain.

Willis was a podium finisher in the second run at Barbon Manor

Results

Barbon Manor

Round 13: 1 Wallace Menzies (3300cc Gould GR59M-Cosworth) 20.72s; 2 Alex Summers (2650cc DJ Firestorm-Cosworth) 20.86s; 3 Trevor Willis (3200cc OMS 28-RTE) 21.21s; 4 Sean Gould (4000cc Gould GR59JB-Judd) 21.45s; 5 Scott Moran (4000cc Gould GR59J-Judd) 22.01s; 6 Eynon Price (1585cc Force TA-Hayabusa) 22.17s; etc.

Round 14: 1 Summers 20.26s; 2 Menzies 20.49s; 3 Gould 20.66s; 4 Willis 21.07s; 5 Dave Uren (3500cc Gould GR55B-NME) 21.18s; 6 Moran 21.53s; etc.

Harewood

Round 15: 1 Menzies 47.99s; 2 Summers 50.49s; 3 Richard Spedding (1340s GWR Raptor 2-Hayabusa) 51.21s; 4 Moran 51.28s; 5 Price 52.86s; 6 Andy Greenen (1070cc Empire Evo2-Hyabusa) 53.15s; etc.

Round 16

Abandoned

Points after 16 rounds: 1 Menzies 142; 2 Summers 137; 3 Gould 100; 4 Moran 93; 5 Willis 83; 6 Uren 45; etc.

THRUXTON: BARC BY ROB HANSFORD — JULY 3-4

SMITH HEADS THE BIG RIGS FOR FOUR WINS AT THRUXTON

It was a strong weekend for reigning British Truck Racing champion Ryan Smith at Thruxton, as he won four out of the five races held across the weekend.

Smith started the opening race of the weekend from third on the grid, having had a number of lap times good enough for pole position deleted due to breaching track limits. He made his way through the order with relative ease, passing Stuart Oliver for the lead on lap three. Smith went on to also win the second race of the day, which ended early after Mark Taylor crashed into the tyre wall at the final chicane on the seventh lap causing fluid from his radiator to leak all over the circuit.

Smith couldn't maintain his unbeaten run on Sunday morning, with John Newell claiming a fantastic victory in race three. Starting from pole, Newell managed to break clear from the rest of the pack early on and with the rest of the field unable to get back on his tow, he stormed clear to finish 6.4 seconds ahead of Oliver in second.

Smith then got back to winning ways in the final two races of the afternoon, extending his championship lead in the process.

Jamie Ellwood had a double podium result in the Caterham Sigma 150 championship. He won a chaotic first race from seventh on the grid in which Chris Savage had a big crash at the first chicane on the opening lap. Savage was clipped by another car coming into the braking zone and the car rolled onto his side before completely going over when the car made it to the gravel trap. Savage got out without injury and the safety car returned to the pits for a final three-lap dash to the finish.

The Mighty Minis were also in action over the weekend with both Greg Jenkins and Steven Rideout collecting victories. Jenkins won the first race of the weekend, while Rideout held on to win the second race, which was closely fought, with the top four separated by less than half a second.

RACE WINNERS

BARC Red Race
Races 1 & 2: Jamie Sturges (Seat Leon TCR)

British Truck Racing
Races 1, 2, 4 & 5: Ryan Smith (Mercedes Actros); **Race 3:** John Newell (MAN TGS)

Caterham Sigma 150
Jamie Ellwood

Hyundai Cup
Races 1 & 2: Alex Cursley (Hyundai Coupe)

Mighty Mini
Race 1: Greg Jenkins; **Race 2:** Steven Rideout

Caterham Sigmax/Sigma 135
Race 1: Harry Senior; **Race 2:** Jamie Winrow

Welsh Sports and Saloons
Races 1 & 2: Chris Everill (Ginetta G50)

All Caterhams/ Non-ch'ship race
Ben Winrow (Caterham 7 SigMax)

MG Owners Club
Race 1: William Sharpe (MG ZR); **Race 2:** Fergus Campbell (MG ZR)

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RACING REPORTS

Photos:mkpics.net

NATIONAL HOT RODS: IPSWICH BY GRAHAM BROWN — JULY 3

Chris Haird mastered the soaking conditions in the final at Ipswich on Saturday

McDonald managed to hold on to his points advantage to win the English crown

HAIRD'S FINALE BUT IT'S McDONALD'S CHAMPIONSHIP

In lieu of the World Final itself, which had originally been scheduled for this weekend, the late addition of a last qualifying round instead helped Chris Haird splash to a great win over Rob McDonald in the final.

But the tiny points advantage that conferred was not sufficient to overturn the Scot's lead in the series, McDonald taking those honours for the second time.

Brett Collison, Colin Hitch, Alistair Lowe and Lance Bowen scrapped for the lead in the opening heat with the Collison-Hitch pairing eventually breaking clear. Hitch managed to get under the leader exiting Turn 4, the black Peugeot quickly opening out what looked like a race-winning advantage.

That reckoned without Mikey Godfrey though. Godfrey's yellow-grade grid position had him stalking the frontrunners from the start and by half distance he was steadily picking off the placemen.

Once through to second it was clear Godfrey was going to be with the leader long before the finish, the blue Tigra 'B' passing Hitch with the five-lap board still some way away. He was able to consolidate his lead by flag fall, although a flying finish by Lee Carlin to take second on the road set out his stall for later. Carlin was hit with a contact penalty though, putting him down to fourth and giving Hitch second back with the again impressive Paul Wright third.

Hitch, Lowe and Bowen went at it once more in heat two, with Carlin hurrying after them before they were all brought up short by yellow flags when Bowen's motor let go, plastering the home straight with oil. Several cars crashed or spun in the aftermath with Shane Bland's Fiesta looking very sorry for itself after smacking the wall hard.

The field ploughed through a plaster dust storm at the restart, Carlin making the best of it to jump Lowe for second before tearing past Hitch to go first. As Lowe fell back Jason Cooper and Gavin Murray both relegated Hitch while the almost race-long dice between Wright and McDonald was resolved when they encountered an awkward Bradley Dynes. McDonald slipped through to nab fifth while the others got into a skirmish which saw both men in a post-race discussion with the steward.

A downpour left standing water on the track for the final which was lined up in points order for this last race of the series. That pretty much made a McDonald (pole) and Haird battle a certainty, with Haird needing to overcome a 17-point deficit somehow if he was going to take the title.

The friendly rivals fought it out with McDonald millimetres ahead until Haird finally managed to out-fumble the Scot going around a backmarker. His timing wasn't great however, as an almost immediate caution for an errant door skin lying on the track created a restart in 'last completed lap' order, putting McDonald back in front.

Haird sat back a little bit following the restart but with the passing of half distance the multi-champ threw the switch, closed the gap, and then pulled off a magnificent outside sweep through the far turn to grab the win. But the two point advantage the winner had gained was nowhere near enough to deny McDonald another well-deserved points title.

Results

Heat one: 1 Mikey Godfrey (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 Colin Hitch (Peugeot 206); 3 Paul Wright (Vauxhall Tigra); 4 Lee Carlin (Peugeot 205); 5 Lance Bowen (Vauxhall Tigra); 6 Brett Collison (Peugeot 206cc); 7 Chris Haird (Vauxhall Tigra); 8 Gavin Murray (Vauxhall Tigra). **Heat two:** 1 Carlin; 2 Jason Cooper (Peugeot 206cc); 3 Murray; 4 Hitch; 5 Rob McDonald (Vauxhall Tigra); 6 Terry Hunn (Ford Fiesta); 7 Wright; 8 Bradley Dynes (Vauxhall Tigra). **Final:** 1 Haird; 2 McDonald; 3 Gordon Alexander (Vauxhall Tigra); 4 Murray; 5 Wright; 6 Cooper; 7 Hunn; 8 Carl Waller-Barrett (Vauxhall Tigra); 9 Dick Hillard (Vauxhall Tigra); 10 Aaron Dew (Ginetta G40R).
Final points: 1 McDonald 423; 2 Haird 406; 3 Billy Wood 374; 4 Murray 327; 5 Dew 325; 6= Alexander and Waller-Barrett 324.

BTRDA RALLYCROSS: BLYTON PARK BY HAL RIDGE — JUNE 27

BLEASDALE BATTLES TO ANOTHER BTRDA VICTORY AS HIS RIVALS FALL BY THE WAYSIDE AT BLYTON PARK

Vauxhall VX220 campaigner Jason Bleasdale made it two wins from two in the BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship at Blyton Park on June 27, the Super Modified driver leading the A final from lights to flag.

Bleasdale's nearest challenger from qualifying, Fred Ling, was unable to take the start of the race due to engine issues with his Ford Fiesta in a day of attrition for the frontrunners.

Former overall BTRDA champion Gary Cook was also sidelined from the final with engine problems with his similar machine to Ling's, while Todd Crooks was eliminated with similar problems during qualifying.

That left a close battle for the runner-up slot in the Super Modified final. BMW Mini racers Leigh-Anne Sedgewick and Darren Bleasdale fought, the latter graduating via the B final, eventually completing the podium, ahead of former Supercar racer Chris Langley in a rear-wheel-drive Ford Focus.

Jason Bleasdale continues to hold a joint lead at the head of the overall BTRDA rallycross points, as former WTCC racer Harry Vaulkhard qualified on pole for the Production A final thanks to consistency but not setting an overall fastest time with his Citroen Saxo, then led the race throughout to take a second straight win.

Super Modified regular Mike Dresser raced a Production-specification Honda Civic in the event and finished second, ahead of B Final winner Maciek Florczak, who narrowly beat Charley Moroney to make it into the A final.

A trio of drivers battled throughout the Classic A final for victory, with Lancia Stratos driver John Cross emerging on top to take the win, ahead of round one winner Vincent Bristow and Classic Hot Rod stalwart Lee Wood. Mark Finch another driver to be forced out with engine issues, while class regular David Ewin rolled his Ford Fiesta in the second qualifying run, the damage sustained forcing him out of the event.

Jonny Chrisp switched to the Modified class for Blyton and was the sole finisher, thus taking the win, while Owen Robbins claimed victory in the Junior class final. Polish driver Kacper Potyra had qualified on pole having dominated qualifying but it was Robbins to who seized the lead on the opening lap from the front row of the gird and never looked back. Corey Padgett climbed from fourth to third in the opening stages after an on-track battle with Max Watt, then came out on top of a close fight for the runner-up position with Potyra to finish second ahead of the polesitter.

Christopher Baker qualified on pole position for the Production 4x4 final thanks to three wins in qualifying, but it was Dan Beattie who made the best start with his Subaru Impreza and led throughout to win. Paul Davis battled for second but was forced out with an intercooler hose problem, leaving Aaron Shaw to finish second ahead of Baker.

Photo: Hal Ridge

Following a strong opening part of the season, Bleasdale is joint top of the points

Results

Round 2: Super Modified: 1 Jason Bleasdale (Vauxhall VX220) 2m56.505s; 2 Leigh-Anne Sedgewick (BMW Mini) +16.912s; 3 Darren Bleasdale (BMW Mini); 4 Chris Langley (Ford Focus); 5 Phil Chicken (Citroen C2); 6 Andy Pecover (BMW Mini). **Production**: Harry Vaulkhard (Citroen Saxo); **Junior:** Owen Robbins (Suzuki Swift); **Production 4x4:** Dan Beattie (Subaru Impreza); **Modified:** Jonny Chrisp (Citroen Saxo); **Classic:** John Cross (Lancia Stratos)

RACING REPORTS

Photos: Gary Hawkins

BRANDS HATCH: MSVR BY STEFAN MACKLEY — JULY 3-4

HEZEMANS PUSHES HIS POINTS LEAD AT BRANDS

Loris Hezemans held his nerve for a Euro NASCAR victory

George Turiccki celebrated his birthday with a Pickup race win

Loris Hezemans extended his lead at the top of the Euro NASCAR Series as the championship returned to Brands Hatch for the first time since 2019 at the popular American SpeedFest event.

The Dutchman took a lights-to-flag victory on Sunday, withstanding pressure from three-time and reigning champion Alon Day before the Israeli ran wide into the Paddock Hill gravel trap on a safety car restart, eventually spinning out for good in the same spot one tour later.

This allowed Gianmarco Ercoli and Sebastiaan Bleekemolen to complete the podium as Brit Alex Sedgwick managed to take fifth on a rare appearance in the category.

Day took the opening win on Saturday, comfortably holding off Hezemans as Nicol Rocco finished third while in Euro NASCAR Series 2, for young and gentleman drivers, the wins were shared between Advait Deodhar and Tobias Dauenhauer.

Miles Rudman proved to be the man to beat in Legends, taking three victories from six races as main title rival John Mikel was stripped of a win having been judged to have caused a multi-car crash when leading on a safety car restart and disqualified post-race.

The multiple champion made amends in the final race of the weekend, though, holding off Rudman to leave Brands with at least one win to his name and intentions of appealing the disqualification.

Chris Needham benefited most from Mikel's DQ, having just outdragged Rudman to the line by 0.052 seconds as Will Gibson in Sunday's second heat completed the winners.

Three Bernie's V8 races produced a trio of different winners, with the Aston Martin Vantage of Sam Wilson heading home class A winner James Plant (Austin Healey 106) and Michael Saunders (Ford Escort Mk1 Mexico).

On a damp track, Saunders produced the goods in race two after a lengthy safety car period following an opening-lap crash for Simon Lane's Chevrolet Camaro on the climb towards Druids. Plant came out on top of the partially reverse-grid third race which was held in the dry.

Reigning Pickup Truck champion George Turiccki won on his birthday having started fifth in race two, while Mark Willis had won earlier.

The on-the-road podium of Steve Burrows, Malcolm Blackman and Lewis Smith were all disqualified from the second Intermarque Silhouettes race after overtaking under yellow flags, handing the win to Ray Harris after multiple champion Blackman had taken the spoils in the opener.

Gary Thornton took both wins in the Formula 5000 races aboard his ex-Peter Gethin Chevron B24, battling hard to beat Neil Glover and Marc Campfield both times.

RACE WINNERS

NASCAR Euro Series Pro
Race 1: Alon Day (Chevrolet Camaro); **Race 2:** Loris Hezemans (Ford Mustang)

NASCAR Euro Series 2
Race 1: Advait Deodhar (Ford Mustang); **Race 2:** Tobias Dauenhauer (Ford Mustang)

Legends
Races 1, 3 & 4: Miles Rudman; **Race 2:** Chris Needham; **Race 5:** Will Gibson; **Race 6:** John Mikel

Bernie's V8s
Race 1: Sam Wilson (Aston Martin Vantage); **Race 2:** Michael Saunders (Ford Escort Mk1 Mexico); **Race 3:** James Plant (Austin Healey 106)

Pickup Trucks
Race 1: Mark Willis; **Race 2:** George Turiccki

Intermarque Silhouettes
Race 1: Malcolm Blackman (Vauxhall Tigra); **Race 2:** Ray Harris (Ginetta G40R)

Formula 5000
Races 1 & 2: Greg Thornton (Chevron B24)

SILVERSTONE: BARC BY ADAM WELLER — JULY 3-4

SPECTACULAR SEVENS RULE THE ROOST AT SILVERSTONE AS PRAGA SPORTSCAR LIFTS THE BRITCAR ENDURANCE SPOILS

The Caterham Seven UK Championship put on a showcase at Silverstone over the weekend, with three different winners from their action-packed encounters.

Will Smith won the first of the category's races from pole, but with upwards of a half-dozen cars battling for and exchanging the top spot during the race, it was anything but lights-to-flag. Smith's winning margin was just 0.02 seconds over Henry Heaton, who worked up to second place from 10th on the grid. Gordon Sawyer completed the podium.

The second race – held in extremely wet conditions – would see Sawyer break away and finish over three seconds clear of Smith, who had a race-long scrap with third-place finisher Stephen Nuttall.

The third and final 20-minute dash would initially see pack racing among the entire top 10. However, on lap seven, a moment at Club for Henry Heaton and James Murphy narrowed the lead battle to a dice between Nuttall and Smith. Nuttall ultimately took the spoils after a couple of minor errors from Smith.

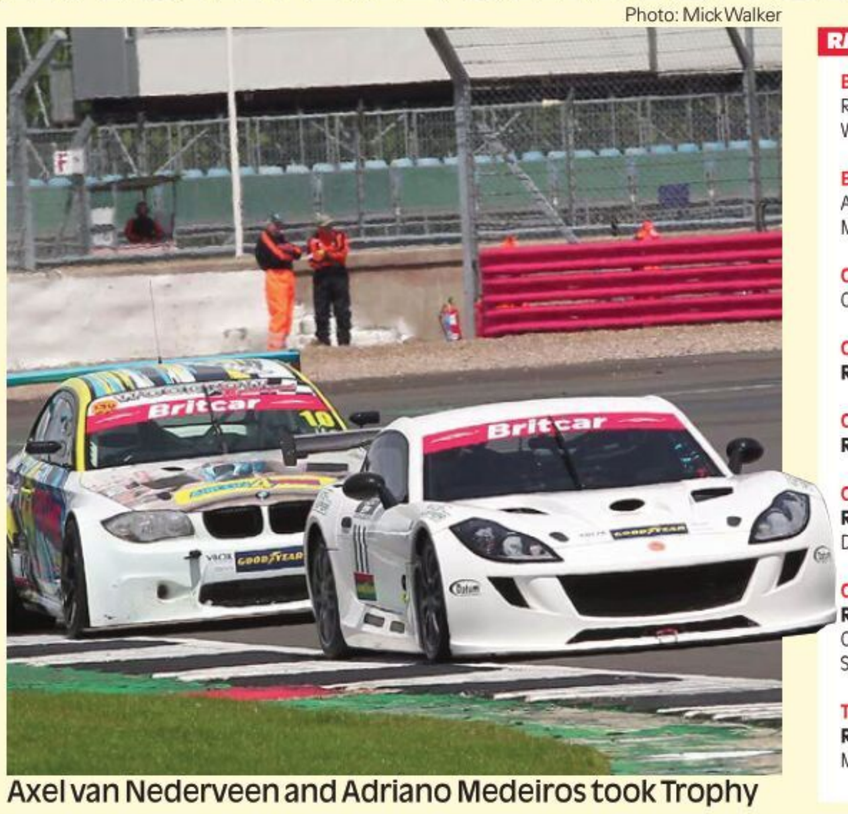
Hugo Bush and Domenique Mannsperger took a win apiece in the Caterham Roadsport Championship, which also provided stellar racing. Mannsperger staved off intense competition, as the top seven finished within two seconds of each other in the second race.

The first two-hour race for Britcar Endurance in several seasons was fraught, with strategy being the main challenge aside from mixed weather conditions, and several running their fuel tanks dry on track. The Powerhouse Performance Praga of Jack Fabby and Charlie Martin won the race on the road. However, a 34-second penalty promoted the CW Motorsport Praga of Richard Morris and Christopher Wesemael to victory, as Fabby failed to serve a stop-go for a short pitstop.

The Motus One McLaren of Dave Scaramanga and Will Powell collected Class One honours, Johnny Mowlem and Bon Grimes won in Class Three, while Nicole Drought and Danny Krywyj claimed class four in the Motus One Hyundai.

Nigel Innes dominated the Toyo Tires Racing Saloons races with two lights-to-flag victories, while the Datum Motorsport Ginetta of Axel van Nederveen and Adriano Medeiros was victorious in both Britcar Trophy races.

Photo: Mick Walker



Axel van Nederveen and Adriano Medeiros took Trophy

RACE WINNERS

Britcar Endurance & Praga
Richard Morris/Christopher Wesemael (Praga R1)

Britcar Trophy
Axel van Nederveen/Adriano Medeiros (Ginetta G56A)

Caterham Academy
Geoff Newman

Caterham Seven 270R
Race 1 & 2: Tom Wyllys

Caterham Seven 310R
Race 1& 2: Lewis Thompson

Caterham Seven Roadsport
Race 1: Hugo Bush **Race 2:** Dominique Mannsperger

Caterham Seven UK
Race 1: William Smith; **Race 2:** Gordon Sawyer; **Race 3:** Stephen Nuttall

Toyo Tires Racing Saloons
Race 1 & 2: Nigel Innes (BMW M3 E36)

OULTON PARK: MSVR BY STEVE WHITFIELD — JULY 3

NEARYS LEFT FEELING TYRED IN THRILLING GT CUP RACES

Richard and Sam Neary shared victory spoils with Michael Igoe and Phil Keen in the GT Cup at Oulton Park, with both races effectively decided in the pitlane.

After building a 16-second lead in the opener for Team Abba Racing on a wet circuit, Neary Sr handed over the Mercedes AMG GT3 to son Sam at the mandatory stop. But a jack failure prevented the team from changing tyres, leaving Neary Jr to nurse his wets to the finish on a drying track. Second placed WPI Motorsport gambled on a switch to slicks at its stop, enabling Keen – taking over driving duties from Igoe in the Lamborghini Huracan GT3 – to catch Neary Jr within five laps. After taking the lead on the outside of Shell Oils Hairpin, Keen pulled away to win by 40 seconds from Neary Jr, with Grahame Tilley and Senna Fielding finishing third from 11th on the grid in a Nissan GTR GT3.

Neary Sr led again in a dry race two after passing Lucky Khera's polesitting Ferrari 458 GTC car. But he could not break clear of Igoe, who hustled him throughout the first stint. Respite was found at the pit stops, with a success penalty for the pursuers allowing Neary Jr to emerge with a five-second lead. A repeat of the race one battle looked on the cards when Keen caught back up, but a late drive-through penalty for pitlane speeding forced him to settle for second. Paul Bailey and Ross Wylie took third as the Brabham BT62 made its second appearance in the championship.

James Caley was denied in the opening Porsche Club race after his car lost power while leading from pole. Reigning champion Simon Clark profited to take his fourth win of the year ahead of Peter Morris and Jack McAleer. Clark won again in the second encounter, with McAleer finishing second ahead of father Mark, while Caley Snr experienced more woe after brake failure put him out while running fifth.

Theo Edgerton took a double victory in the Porsche Sprint Challenge, leading home Jack Bartholomew and Ethan Hawkey in both races.

RACE WINNERS

GT Cup
Race 1: Michael Igoe/Phil Keen (Lamborghini Huracan GT3); **Race 2:** Richard Neary/Sam Neary (Mercedes AMG GT3)

Porsche Club
Races 1 & 2: Simon Clark (Cayman S)

Porsche Sprint Challenge
Races 1 & 2: Theo Edgerton (Cayman GT4 Clubsport)

Track Attack Race Club
Races 1 & 2: Robert Buckland (Renault Clio)

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RACING REPORTS

Photos: Steve Jones

CASTLE COMBE: CCRC BY MARCUS PYE — JULY 3-4

BATH'S OLIVER WHITE TAKES THE FF BISCUIT

White was made to work for Combe Formula Ford success by unlucky Felix Fisher

Andy Wilson wrestled his Holden around Wiltshire for Historic Thunder race wins

Two more victories for Bath's Oliver White at the Classic and Retro Race Weekend took Souley Motorsport's Medina racer's tally to six from seven this season.

He is all but confirmed as 2021 Castle Combe Formula Ford champion, but Felix Fisher looked set to beat him for the second time when his TM Racing Ray GR05's gear linkage broke.

Top qualifier White led the first leg from the start, but Fisher refused to be shaken off and finished 0.280 seconds adrift. Luke Cooper (Swift Cooper SC18) was a solid third once Ben Mitchell (Van Diemen RF99) fell to eighth, hobbled by a blocked carb jet.

Ray drivers Kieran Attwood (GR07) and Tom Hawkins (GR11) shone in fourth and fifth, ahead of Class B victor Nathan Ward (Swift SC92). Richard Higgins (RF88) and his four-time champion dad Bob (Macon MR7) claimed the other class honours.

A four-car breakaway characterised race two, with Fisher, Mitchell, White and Cooper flat out throughout. Fisher had blunted White's challenge when he pitted. Mitchell led onto the last lap but was dive-bombed into Quarry by White and Cooper. Ben got a run on them out of Camp but stayed third in a thrilling finish.

Hawkins, Ward and Attwood completed the top six. Combe debutant James Hadfield (RF86) won class C auspiciously, despite losing momentum when Chris Acton (GR08) spun in front of him at Quarry.

Sunday's wet Equipe GTS mini-enduro was won by Richard Woolmer who started the previous day's fifth-place man Richard Knight's Elva Courier from the back. Aided by a safety car, Woolmer led by lap nine then engaged Saturday victor Lee Atkins (TVR Grantura) and Tom Smith (MGB) in synchronised drifting which wowed spectators.

Both rivals gyrated, but Woolmer kept his head. Atkins took the aggregate classification from Smith and Knight/Woolmer. Jamie Boot controlled his rampant TVR Griffith neatly to complete a Equipe Libre double, chased by the swashbuckling Healeys of James Haxton/Jack Rawles and Mark Holme, who welcomed the rain, hanging their tails out alarmingly.

The bellowing Holden Monaro of Andy Wilson only just beat long-time leader Steve Putt's extraordinary home-brewed Mazda-Chevrolet RX-7 rocketship in the Saturday's CTCRC Historic Thunder opener when broken rockers slowed the hybrid. Neil Philpotts' staggeringly accelerative Mitsubishi Starion finished second on Sunday.

The Prebble brothers added four more Combe victories to their CVs. Adam aced the resident Saloon pair, his Vauxhall Astra turbo shadowed by Gary until a driveshaft issue slowed his Seat Leon. Gary retired from the sequel, promoting championship leader James Keepin (MG ZR), unbeaten in class C, to second, ahead of Ben Hindle (Vauxhall Corsa).

Gary's consolation was a CTCRC Pre-'93/'03 double over AJ Owen's younger Honda Civic Type R and BMW E36 M3 duo Kevin Willis and Ian Bower. Tim Adams – son of 1989 World Group C2 champion Nick – controlled the Hot Hatch races in an older Civic. Pressure subsided when Chris Southcott's Peugeot 205 and Craig Tomkinson's Vauxhall Nova suffered mechanical failures.

Mike Luck lost out to VW Golfer Simon Jeffs in Saturday's CTCRC Pre-'66/'83 race, but the BMW 320 man charged back to win Sunday's wet one. Tom Robinson's supercharged XJR6 won the JEC races.

Oliver Bull again dominated the GT races, pursued by defending champion Tony Bennett (Caterham R300) and Dominic Shepherd in his intriguing Nissan-powered 'Audi Supertourer,' imported from Denmark last year.

Graham Charman won the CCRC Sports Racing races in his Ford Duratec-powered Juno, but impressive novice Andy Fido – racing his Radical SR3 for the second time – focused him.

RACE WINNERS

CRCC Formula Ford
Races 1&2: Oliver White (Medina JL17K)

CCRC GT
Races 1&2: Oliver Bull (Vauxhall Tigra-Ford)

CCRC Hot Hatch Challenge
Races 1&2: Tim Adams (Honda Civic)

CRCC Saloons
Races 1&2: Adam Prebble (Vauxhall Astra turbo)

CCRC Sports Racing
Races 1&2: Graham Charman (Juno-Ford TR300)

Equipe GTS
Race 1: Lee Atkins (TVR Grantura 1800S); **Race 2:** Richard Woolmer (Elva Courier)

Equipe Libre
Races 1&2: Jamie Boot (TVR Griffith)

CTCRC Historic Thunder/BOSS
Races 1&2: Andy Wilson (Holden Monaro)

CTCRC Pre-93/03
Races 1&2: Gary Prebble (Honda Civic)

CTCRC Pre-66/83
Race 1: Simon Jeffs (VW Golf GTi Mk1); **Race 2:** Mike Luck (BMW E21 320)

CTCRC JEC
Races 1&2: Tom Robinson (Jaguar XJR6)

Prowling Prebbles

KNOCKHILL: CSCC BY STEPHEN BRUNSDON — JULY 3-4

BENOY BENEFITS AS CLASSIC CIRCUS HEADS NORTH OF THE BORDER FOR THE FIRST TIME

Simon Benoy gave his Hillman Imp its first Classic Sports Car Club victory, fittingly on the car's home ground at Knockhill in the Swinging Sixties last weekend.

The CSCC's maiden visit across the border featured a unique two-day meeting that utilised both the clockwise and anti-clockwise configurations of the Fife circuit either day, with Benoy clinching a double win in the Group 1 encounters.

"The car's history lies in Scotland, which is where it was built and developed, so it was only right that its first win came here at Knockhill too," Benoy said post-race.

Mark Campbell claimed both of the Group 2 races in his Triumph TR4, despite having to serve a 40-second success penalty at his mandatory pitstop.

The Tin Top races could not have been more contrasting across the weekend, as Russell Thomson (Renault Clio Cup) and James Slater and Richard Harman (Honda Civic Type-R) split the wins. Thomson's late divebomb of Harman at the Hairpin at the end of race one was the highlight, while the latter made amends in the second race after a 60s time penalty for Colin and Steve Simpson's Peugeot 206 RC.

In the Future and Modern Classics, Matt Holben took both wins, but his first triumph came after on-the-road winner Billy Thompson was excluded for not taking his mandatory pitstop.

Although the weekend was largely dry and warm, heavy rain affected both Magnificent Sevens races, with Sunday's second encounter ending under thunder and lightning. David Watson produced a masterclass race one, winning by well over a minute in his Spire RB7, but spun out of a frenetic lead battle with Colin Watson in race two, ending his hopes of a double. Richard Carter took the win after a 30s penalty for Colin Watson.

After admitting to "accidentally overtaking people" due to brake issues in race one, Dave Griffin secured victory in the second combined New Millennium/Open/Tin Tops race, heavily influenced by a late safety car intervention. Second-placed Chris Petch was disqualified for passing behind the safety car, while race one winner Stewart Robb (TVR Tuscan) elected not to race on Sunday.

Photo: Jim Moir

Simon Benoy gave his Hillman Imp quite the homecoming

RACE WINNERS

Modern Classics/Future Classics
Races 1 & 2: Matt Holben (TVR Tuscan)

New Millennium/Turbo Tin Tops/Open Series
Race 1: Stewart Robb (TVR Tuscan Challenge); **Race 2:** Dave Griffin (BMW M3 E36)

Tin Tops/Puma Cup
Race 1: Russell Thomson (Renault Clio Cup); **Race 2:** James Slater/Richard Harman

Swinging Sixties Group 1
Races 1 & 2: Simon Benoy (Hillman Imp)

Swinging Sixties Group 2
Races 1 & 2: Mark Campbell (Triumph TR5)

Magnificent Sevens
Race 1: David Watson (Spire RB7); **Race 2:** Richard Carter (Caterham R300)

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE

Fifty years ago this Sunday Pedro Rodriguez was killed in an Interserie race at the Norisring. Like Jim Clark, his death in a rather insignificant event was incongruous. In Rodriguez's case – the pure racer and flamboyant talent – it was perhaps especially so.

Rodriguez and the daunting Porsche 917 were synonymous, while Brands Hatch's BOAC 1000km on April 12 1970 still is recalled in reverential tones by anyone who witnessed it. It was the Mexican's greatest day.

And YouTube has intimate footage from it at: youtube.com/watch?v=K0YCGF3ncEY or you can search for: '1970 Brands Hatch 1000km Pedro Rodriguez Rain Master'.

The narrator, with typical English understatement, calls the Kent conditions "hardly ideal", yet the rain master Rodriguez in John Wyer's Gulf Porsche 917K brought magic to the scene, the track providing the canvas for his artistry.

And he had more adversity to overcome even than the weather, as he lost a load of time early on from being called into the pits to be reprimanded for passing under yellows he didn't see in the spray. Fishtailing angrily back into the action he led the "regatta" by lap 20 and was never seen again, winning by no fewer than five laps.

Graham Keilloh

Pedro: rain master

TV GUIDE

The British Grand Prix is almost upon us and Sky Sports F1 gets us in the mood with various Formula 1 home rounds of old.

It starts with the scintillating 2003 event shown in full on Sunday, at 1230hrs-1415hrs, and on Monday it has the entire 2012 race, at 1900hrs-2045hrs. Then on Tuesday and Wednesday there are highlights of various home wins. On Tuesday it's the 1991 race (1900hrs-1945hrs) followed by 1994's (1945hrs-2015hrs), while on Wednesday there are the famous 1986 (1900hrs-1945hrs) and 1987 races (1945hrs-2030hrs).

Mansell: Brands 1986

And if you feel you need to reacquaint yourself with this year's F1 season then today starting at 1630hrs the same channel is showing highlights.

Eurosport 2 also has the action from this weekend's World Touring Car Cup round from Aragon, with qualifying shown on Sunday morning at 0900hrs-1000hrs, immediately before the channel shows the first race live. You can watch race two post hoc at 2130hrs-2230hrs followed by the Pure ETCR action at 2230hrs-2330hrs.

BT Sport has something for rally fans with The WRC Magazine shown several times including on Sunday at 2030hrs-2100hrs on BT Sport 1.

Graham Keilloh

LIVE TV

FORMULA E NEW YORK
Qualifying: Saturday, 1715hrs-1850hrs, Eurosport 2
Race 1: Saturday, 2100hrs-2305hrs, Eurosport 2 and BBC red button
Race 2: Sunday, 1800hrs-2005hrs, Eurosport 2 and BBC red button

WORLD TOURING CAR CUP ARAGON
Race 1: Sunday, 1000hrs-1100hrs, Eurosport 2

V8 SUPERCARS TOWNSVILLE
Race 1: Saturday, 0630hrs-0900hrs, BT Sport 2
Race 2: Sunday, 0530hrs-0800hrs, BT Sport 2

NASCAR ATLANTA
Race: Sunday, 2000hrs-0000hrs, Premier Sport 2

LISTINGS

FRIDAY-SUNDAY

■ **Brands Hatch, Kent**
Legends of Brands Super Prix: HGPCA, FF1600, Thundersports, Aurora Trophy/Geoff Lees Trophy, Classic Formula 3/Classic FF2000, Historic Formula 3, Historic FF2000, Historic FF1600, Classic FF1600, Historic Touring Cars, Guards Trophy, Historic Road Sports, '70s Road Sports, Classic Clubmans, Formula Junior **Starts** Friday, racing from 1435hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Saturday, racing from 1340hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1200hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs) **Admission** adult £22, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000 **Advance tickets only**

SATURDAY

■ **Oulton Park, Cheshire**
VSCC meeting: Pre-War Sports, Vintage/Pre '61 Racing Cars, VSCC Specials, Light Cars, Allcomers Handicaps, Allcomers Scratch, Ecurie Classic **Starts** racing from 1300hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs) **Admission** adult £22, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000 **Advance tickets only**

SATURDAY-SUNDAY

■ **Donington Park, Leics**
British GT meeting: British GT, British F3, Ginetta GT5, Ginetta Academy, City Car **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1420hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0910hrs **Admission** adult £22, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000 **Advance tickets only**

■ **Snetterton, Norfolk**
MSVR meeting: Ferrari Challenge, Ferrari Classic **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1535hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1015hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** adult £14, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000 **Advance tickets only**

■ **Anglesey, Wales**
BRSCC meeting: FF1600, Mazda MX-5, Modified Fords, Fun Cup **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1320hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1025hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs) **Admission** to be confirmed **Web** angleseycircuit.com

■ **Cadwell Park, Lincs**
MSVR meeting: Sports 2000, Focus Cup, Elise Trophy, FF1600, Allcomers MSVR Super Cup **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1245hrs (practice from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0930hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** adult £14, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000 **Advance tickets only**

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Photographs must be of a good quality and please send no more than three images

ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!

Now imagine the noise...photo by Richard Salisbury

BMWs in full flight, by Alex Ireland

Wallace Menzies, by David Harbey

Dean Chilvers saw Jason Plato at Brands

A Caterham pushing, by Chris Noble

NEXT WEEK — OUT THURSDAY, JULY 15

BRITISH GRAND PRIX PREVIEW!
The big race is here

MN readers' questions with Williams star George Russell

Full team-by-team analysis

John Watson reflects on an epic win in 1981

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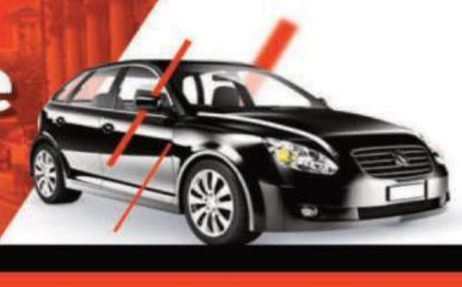

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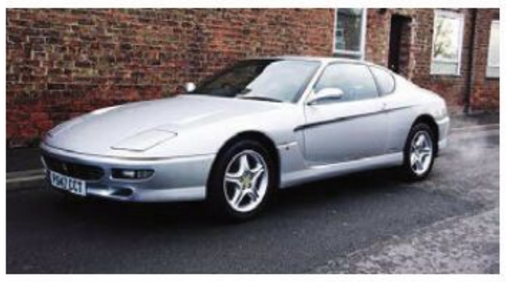

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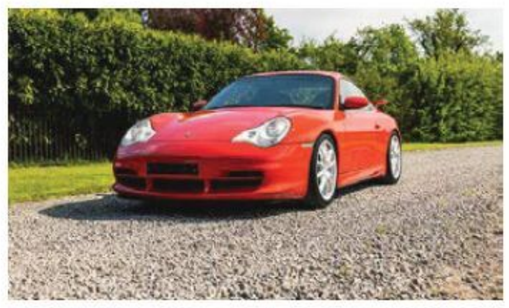

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